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5529



James Lenox.

AIN
(Bonnell, J.)

Hamilton

THE
EXEMPLARY
LIFE AND CHARACTER
OF

JAMES BONNELL, ESQ.

LATE ACCOMPTANT GENERAL OF IRELAND.

BY WILLIAM HAMILTON, A.M.

ARCHDEACON OF ARMAGH.

THE EIGHTH EDITION, CORRECTED.

*Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright ; for the end of that man
is peace. Paal. xxxvii. 37.*

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THE
EXEMPLARY LIFE AND CHARACTER
OF
JAMES BONNELL, Esq.

JAMES BONNELL, Esq. was born at Genoa, Mr. Bon-
November 14, 1653. He was son (by Re- nell's birth
becca, daughter of Thomas Sayer, near and family.
Norwich, Esq.) to Samuel Bonnell, merchant, who
resided some time at Genoa, and many years at Leg-
horn; where the great trade he carried on, his sweet
and obliging behaviour, but especially the piety and
integrity of his life, procured him great credit and
esteem. His grandfather was Daniel Bonnell, of
London, merchant: his great grandfather, Thomas
Bonnell, a gentleman of a good family, near Ipres in
Flanders, who, to avoid Duke D'Alva's fury, then
cruelly persecuting the Protestants in the Low Coun-
tries, transported himself and his family into England,
and settled at Norwich; where he was so well re-
ceived, and so much esteemed, as to be afterwards
chosen mayor of that city. Thus a zeal for religion,
professed in its greatest purity, was Mr. Bonnell's

hereditary virtue ; what he derived from his ancestors, and constantly maintained himself in times of greatest difficulty and danger.

His father's character. Samuel Bonnell, father of James Bonnell, after being bred up under Sir William Cour-

teen, knight, one of the greatest merchants of his time, and for some time entrusted with the sole management of his affairs, applied himself to the Italian trade at Leghorn, which he did with such success, that about the year 1649, he was worth at least ten thousand pounds, and his credit much greater than his fortune : but both were soon impaired by several accidents, by great losses at sea, but particularly by his zeal for the royal family ; of whose sufferings he ever had a most tender sense, and whom he privately supplied with considerable sums of money : and there yet remain letters to him from the then queen mother, King Charles the Second, and his brother the Duke of York, " Acknowledging his fast friendship to them, and the supplies they had so seasonably received from him, and recommending Mr. Killegrew to him, whom they sent to promote their interests in those parts." All the losses and misfortunes which befel him, he bore with great submission to the will of God ; and composed many devout meditations upon those melancholy occasions, which yet remain among his son's papers, most of which were for his wife's use, and sent to her when he was forced to be absent from her : and both those papers, and the informations of some who knew him, particularly the reverend Mr. Strype, minister of Low-Leyton, near London, nephew to Samuel Bon-

nell, and his son's constant friend, do all concur in this; that he was a man of great sweetness of temper, sincere virtue, and exemplary piety.

About the year 1655, Samuel Bonnell removed with his family into England; and upon the restoration of the royal family, the services he had done them, and his known abilities for such an employment, procured him a patent to be Accomptant General of the revenue of Ireland, his son's life being included in the patent with his own. But this he was not long possessed of, for he died in the year 1664, leaving his son James Bonnell, and one daughter, to the care of his wife, a woman of singular piety and prudence, both which she employed in the education of her son, chiefly in giving a right tincture to his mind, and seasoning it with the love of virtue and religion.

His father settles in England, and is made Accomptant General in Ireland.

Dies.

After he had been instructed in the first rudiments of learning in Dublin, he was sent to Trim school, and committed to the care of the reverend Doctor Tenison, afterwards Lord Bishop of Meath; by whose instructions he equally improved in learning and religion; and so great a sense had he of his master's kindness and care, that he mentions it more than once in his private papers, with very grateful acknowledgements: and his lordship always remembered with pleasure Mr. Bonnell's early accomplishments; and was pleased thus to express himself concerning him; "He then signalized himself for sweetness of humour [and good-nature, and was from a child of a most innocent and gentle behaviour, never inclined

to any vice, but strictly religious, and extraordinarily ingenious : and made such great progress in his studies, that he went early to the university, and acquired a great deal of learning in a short time, as I found when he returned to this kingdom, and came to visit me."

But as Mr. Bonnell, through the whole His early piety. course of his life, was chiefly remarkable for his great piety; so it is the history of his piety the reader is here chiefly to expect; and though I shall not omit any of the material passages of his life, yet I shall principally enlarge upon his piety : and that took very early possession of his heart, and prevented the suggestions of Satan, and temptations of the world. The first books he read with pleasure, were those of devotion; and the care of his parents and instructors was so blessed, by the grace of God, that he set out betimes in the way to heaven; prosecuted his journey with indefatigable diligence, and persevered in it to the last.

And that Mr. Bonnell's piety was of this early growth, I shall shew, by inserting here at large his own account of it, which I find among his private papers.

Written anno 1675, in the 22nd year of his age. "From the beginning of my life," says he, "I had a great sense of piety. Lord ! my corruptions I had from nature, I brought them with me into the world ;

this was thy grace, thy gift, thy undeserved favour. I remember the great delight I took in reading books of devotion at ten years old, and said then to my mother, ' If we were as holy as David, how happy should we

be?" At eleven years old, I used to get up from my bed-fellows on Sunday mornings, to say the prayers for that day, out of the Practice of Piety, which was sent me as a token from a friend, and which I was pleased with, as an invaluable present. At twelve I remember I found it difficult at waking to begin with God, as the Practice of Piety directs, and therefore I writ out the words which are there proposed to be said, and put them under my pillow, to have them ready at waking. At thirteen, I had read several books of piety and devotion. In the perusal of the Practice of Piety, I was pleased with the proposal of a methodical course of religion, and allured with the arguments it uses to urge it; having been all along possessed that it was my duty, so I was more easily inclined to it. At length, by my intense reading of this book, and being delighted with the meditations, soliloquies, and passionate passages of it, my whole thoughts were taken up with the things of another world, and I grew cool to all the delights of this. While these thoughts were upon me, the Lord's-day came welcome to me, which I was prepared to sanctify, according to the directions of my book, and former instructions, which I had long before received with my education; but never found myself so willing to practise them, as then. On that day, my thoughts were wholly taken up with religious contemplations; so that when I went into my chamber in the evening, and there made a recollection of my whole life, according to the schemes for examination, which I had in the Practice of Piety and other books, and being taken up in an intense con-

sideration of my sins, and my duty ; of God, and heaven, and hell, &c, my affections were raised to a pitch higher than ordinary, and my spirits more fixed and composed. I then prostrated myself before God, and humbled myself for my sins ; being, as I imagined, in such a pitch of godly sorrow as would answer the characters of it, which my book proposed to me. Then taking up resolutions of amendment, and begging strength of God, I rose up from my knees, in a pleased persuasion that the work of repentance (which my book told me I must begin with, and be very solemn in) was past. And that now I might with comfort pass on to the methodical practice of the duties of religion. So I cheerfully lay down, and cheerfully rose. I read the Bible, I prayed, making use of the forms in the Practice of Piety and other books that I had, and on Sunday mornings more largely confessing my sins, and examining myself. Thus went I cheerfully on, endeavouring to maintain my ground, and persist in my practice ; rejoicing much that the work of conversion, as I thought, was past with me, which the books I then read, and the persons that discoursed with me, had so much possessed me with. Nevertheless under what opinion or notion soever I then did it, I do, as I have just cause, bless and praise the God of heaven, that he did so early let me see what was the practice of godliness ; that I enjoyed so great an encouragement after holiness, as a taste of the sweetness of it. For this great and distinguishing goodness of the Lord, my soul doth, and ever will praise his holy name ! At this time Mr. Tenison my master, (of whose religious care of me I

shall always have a very grateful remembrance,) discoursed with me about receiving the sacrament; I readily consented, not being a little rejoiced at the invitation, which seemed to come as it were from God himself. So I practised the directions which my books gave me, and endeavoured to prepare myself according to my light and ability. My notions of it were obscure, for the books I had read were so, and very allegorical. Yet I hope God will lay no sin to my charge, that might arise from thence; since it was what I was then capable of, from the instructions I had."

These were the happy beginnings of Mr. Bonnell's piety; and what mighty advances in religion might not be hoped from a zeal so early and yet so strong? How few, even in their happiest periods of life, when their reason is best improved, and their graces most lively and vigorous, can give a better account of their piety, than Mr. Bonnell in the beginning of his youth! How firm and lasting must the building be, whose foundation was so deeply laid! And such his piety proved, encreasing with his reason and years, till all were completed in a happy eternity.

At fourteen years of age, being fit for the University, he was removed from Trim school: but his friends, who were nicely solicitous about his education, chose to send him to a private philosophy school in Oxfordshire; believing him there more out of the way of temptation, and resolving not to expose him to the infectious dangers of a great city, and numerous acquaintance. But how much persons of the like sentiments are mistaken in their opinions of these private

seminaries, may appear from Mr. Bonnell's account of that, which his friends made choice of for him, and preferred to all our famous seats of learning. "I was sent," says he, "to Oxfordshire, to a private house, for fear of being corrupted at the University: our tutor was Mr. Cole, who had formerly been principal of St. Mary Hall in Oxford; he read to us Aristotle's Philosophy, and instructed us in the classics and oratory: he preached twice every Sunday to his family and us: here I stayed two years and a half; but my unhappiness was, that there was no practice of receiving the sacrament in that place, so that I could have no solemn, earnest, and serious recollection of myself, neither were my associates such from whom I might learn any part of godliness, but, on the contrary, all debauchery; so that my friends' care seemed herein to be deluded, had I not been otherwise principled before, and had some tincture of my Trim sentiments still on my mind: our tutor was too remiss in matters of morality and religion, though I cannot accuse himself of any thing that was ill." At last he concludes, "I cannot with comfort reflect upon the time spent in that place." And he has been often heard to say, when speaking of that private school, "that in it were all the dangers and vices of the University, without the advantages."

From Oxfordshire he removed to Catherine Hall in Cambridge, having been entered there a year before, by his friend and kinsman Mr. Strype, then of the same house. There his tutor was the learned Doctor Calamy, who, upon several occasions, expressed the esteem he had for his pupil, commending

him to Mr. Strype and others, for his learning, gravity, and manliness, both in discourse and behaviour ; but chiefly for his constancy at religious duties, being hardly ever known to miss prayers, all the time he continued at Cambridge. Here he enjoyed all those advantages, the want of which he lamented so much before ; the frequent returns of the sacrament kept his mind in a true devout frame, put him upon the strictest researches into his past life, and the most solemn and serious resolutions of adhering to his duty. Here also he had friends and companions every way suited to his own genius and manner of life, such as were most remarkable for their parts and piety ; the chief of which were, Dr. Gouge, late Minister of St. Martin in the Fields, London ; Dr. Blackall, minister of St. Mary Aldermary, London ; and Mr. James Calamy his tutor's brother. Here he pursued all those methods of devotion he had begun before, and went on to farther degrees of religious strictness ; particularly, here he first resolved upon keeping fasting days, which all his life after he religiously observed. " This," says he, " is what all books of devotion commend, and what I had known to be the practice of several religious persons. Looking upon it, therefore, as my bounden duty, I bethought myself what day of the week would be most convenient, and without any vows, immediately set upon it ; and very great did I find the benefit of being sequestered from the world, and enjoying myself alone ; it inured my mind to devotion, and kept it sensible and tender, and accustomed me to acts of mortification and self-denial. These days, if the weather were fair and calm, I

would usually spend in the fields ; if otherwise, in some empty chamber in the College ; in the absence of my chamber-fellow, in my own chamber ; or in my study, if he were there : but not so as to give him, or any else, the least suspicion of this practice all the time I was there."

His advancement in learning kept equal pace with his improvements in piety and years ; for he prosecuted his studies with indefatigable diligence, and performed all his academical exercises with general approbation : and when sometimes his eager pursuit of learning would occasion a thought to arise in his mind that a whole day every week, was what he could not spare from his studies, with indignation he would reject that suggestion, as coming from his spiritual enemy ; " He considered it," as he expresses it, " that it were just in God to punish such thoughts, by blasting all his studies ; but if he cheerfully gave that time to God, his goodness would supply that and more to him, having promised to add all things to those, who first seek the kingdom of heaven, and his righteousness."

Removes into
Mr. Freeman's
family.

From Catherine Hall, (after he had taken his degrees in learning) he removed into the family of Ralph Freeman, of Aspeden Hall, in Hertfordshire, Esq. and undertook the education of his eldest son ; a trust which he ever esteemed one of the most weighty in the world, and which none should undertake without earnest resolutions of conscientiously discharging it. And it was very happy for Mr. Freeman, that he found one who had all those qualifications, which he

could wish in an instructor and friend for his son : great sweetness of temper, joined with a sound and penetrating judgment ; a sedate gravity to command respect, mixed with an easy cheerfulness to gain love ; a happy way of explaining the difficulties of learning, having clear notions himself of what he undertook to make intelligible to his pupil ; a noble genius, and lively fancy, tempered with discretion and prudence ; and what was more valuable than all these, great strictness of life, and an excellent talent at recommending piety to young persons, which is a peculiar art ; few knowing how to clothe religion in its true dress, most making it rather a burthen than a pleasure to beginners, so as rather to frighten them from it, than engage them to love it.

This gentleman, Mr. Bonnell very happily instructed, making the most difficult parts of learning plain and easy to him ; but his principal aim was, to give young Mr. Freeman right notions of religion and virtue ; which he not only endeavoured in his constant conversation with him, but for his use composed many pious meditations, with short reflections and advices upon the daily occurrences of life.

He continued in Mr. Freeman's family till the year 1678, and then went with his pupil into Holland, and staid near a year in Sir Leoline Jenkins's family at Nimeguen, very much to his satisfaction. From Nimeguen, he went in the ambassador's company through Flanders and Holland, and so returned for England. From that time he continued with his pupil till the year 1683, when Mr. Freeman was sent into France

Goes into
Holland
with Mr.
Freeman.

and Italy. In 1684, Mr. Bonnell went into France, and met Mr. Freeman at Lyons; and in his company visited several parts of France: and so great was his tenderness and concern for Mr. Freeman, that he being taken dangerously ill of the small-pox at Tours, Mr. Bonnell constantly exposed himself to that distemper, though it was what he never had; and upon his being able to use them, supplied him with many excellent meditations, and often joined with him in prayers and thanksgivings for his recovery.

By his prudent behaviour and ingenious conversation at Nimeguen, he procured Sir Leoline Jenkins's esteem and friendship, who, in his letters to Mr. Freeman's father, highly applauded Mr. Bonnell's conduct, and was ever ready to serve him with his interest at court, when his affairs required it. And, with respect to his pupil Mr. Freeman, as never man took truer pains to instruct and accomplish him, to improve him with knowledge, and adorn him with piety; so he continually reaped new satisfactions from the success of his labours: but chiefly the most delightful part of them, his endeavours to give Mr. Freeman a right sense of his duty to God, and fix the impressions of religion in his mind. They frequently joined together in prayer, and every day their devotions led the way to their studies; the *Te Deum* and some other Psalms being the first business of it. And though he kept Mr. Freeman close to these exercises, yet he managed them so, as that they might not prove uneasy to a youthful mind. And to this day Mr. Freeman retains a most grateful sense of Mr. Bonnell's care of

him, and has owned in the kindest manner since his death : " That it was his prudent management and good instructions, which kept him from following many ill examples of great looseness and immorality ; and hindered him from running into many mischiefs, he should hardly otherwise have avoided : that when he was absent from him, he constantly reminded him by letter, of his former good instructions ; which had the greater impressions on him, as knowing they were meant in great kindness."

And, no doubt, Mr. Freeman always reflected with pleasure, on the advantages he enjoyed by Mr. Bonnell's conversation and example so many years ; and considered how invaluable a blessing that was, and what reason he had to praise God for it ; since such an instructor, and so faithful a friend, might have preserved many men (had they been so happy as he was) from those fatal miscarriages which have ended in their ruin : and that, therefore, he lay under particular obligations to God, for so distinguishing a mark of his favour and goodness.

Were the generality of our gentry blessed with instructors of Mr. Bonnell's temper and piety ; his gravity, prudence, and holy life ; with those who are acquainted (as he was) with the methods of gentle conversation ; who can dive into a young gentleman's genius, and rightly form his mind ; we should soon see a happy change in their principles and lives : religion would have their first and principal regard ; and it would be no part of their character, to be vicious or profane. Such ought to be enquired after for this noble trust, who are not narrow in their fortunes, nor

servile in their natures, and have had a generous education themselves; such whose presence carries awe along with it, and whose lives are fit to be made patterns to their pupils. And when such excellent persons are found, they are to be treated in such a manner, as may bring both their persons and employments into esteem and credit; as may plainly shew, that they and their labours are highly prized and valued. By this means, the greatest trust in the commonwealth, and upon which most depends, would not be put (as it too often happens) into the worst hands; who, for want of right qualities, are neglected by those, whose business it is to secure them from contempt, and whose example influences others, till they lose all authority, even with those who are under their care, and consequently all capacity of doing them good. But with Mr. Bonnell, it was entirely otherwise; he was every way qualified to gain esteem; his learning and prudence, his behaviour and manner of life, commanded just respect; his fortune secured him from all temptations to mean compliances, (for on that alone he could have subsisted) and the great severity of his life, exacted reverence from all he conversed with.

During Mr. Bonnell's stay in Mr. Freeman's family, he had frequent returns of sickness and pain; his constitution was tender, and easily injured: and I find, by the meditations he then composed, that his body was an uncomfortable companion to his mind; and that he was frequently disturbed in his religious course by bodily disorders. He complains with great passion of himself, for being sometimes uneasy under

a load of sickness, and wishing its removal with too much eagerness. One or two of these meditations, written in the year 1680, in the twenty-seventh year of his age, will give the reader a view of his happy progress in piety; and how bravely he encountered the difficulties he met with, from the world and himself; from a distempered body, and those other infirmities which all mankind feel, and are not to be entirely conquered while we are in this world.

Thus in one place he confesses his weakness to God, and prays for his help. "O my God! what shall I think of myself! What shall I say to thee! What am I but a sinful discontented creature, whose obedience has at best been very imperfect! Thou hast long afflicted me with a lingering sickness, in the flower of my life; and hast added (because I have not duly improved by this) other chastisements besides, and which I hope have not wanted their effect upon my soul. Thou, Lord, art wise, and thy wisdom is deeply to be adored by us, which I humbly desire to do. But ah! Lord, had my wisdom been to choose my chastisement, I would have had less of a painful sickness, and more of such other afflictions as thou layest upon men; and this, not to please my flesh, but for the good of my soul; having found by so much experience, that this is not so proper to kill our sins, and turn our hearts to thee; not so mortifying to the pride or discontent of our minds; not so quickening to repentance, and other Christian graces, as the loss of estate, and displeasure of men; the falseness of friends, and injuries from others. True indeed, when once thou didst raise my sickness

so as to consume my body, and make even my life dangerous, through the blessing of thy grace, it had a saving effect upon my soul : but in all other times, the natural effect of it has been, to make me intermit my devotions, and disturb my pious thoughts ; to make me uneasy and discontented with my condition, and impatient after change. But in other afflictions, while the health of the body remains entire, the heart is humbled, our devotions are quickened, and we fast and pray to good purpose, till our soul is brought over to thee, and confirmed in thy ways. If I now fast, it is not only all the time in pain, but ends in more, by encreasing my distemper, and indisposing my mind for the exercises of religion ; the constant practice of which alone maintains the life of my soul. And yet thou choosest thus to afflict me still ! However, Lord, I will fast, and O ! that I may never omit to pray. And do thou, O Lord, fortify my soul, I beseech thee, that in that I may ever persevere : let me consider, that the life of my soul is above the health of my body, however I find it daily to decay.

“ Upon the whole, O my God, I am weary of being discontented and murmuring against thee. I humbly confess, that I have found, in the depth of my heart, that my prayers to thee, for making me contented with my condition, have had too often this meaning, that thou shouldest make my condition such as I might (vouchsafe to) be contented with ; and that when I have resolved to submit myself to thee, and be contented, it has been with a prospect, or secret hopes, after such a condition ; and that, therefore, when thou hast disappointed these wilful and ground

less hopes, I have resumed my former impatience : this, Lord, upon a serious review, has been too often the sense of my heart. But behold, I am truly displeased at myself, and both weary and ashamed of my impatience ; and, therefore, do desire most humbly to return unto thee, and with thee to condemn myself. Thou hast vouchsafed often to enlighten and quiet my soul, who have not deserved that favour from thee : and this one consideration shall satisfy me, as it has done, that thou only knowest the time of my life here, and how to make a suitable provision for that time. Yet, O Lord, I groan under the burden of an aching flesh, and many, (though not extreme, which is thy mercy) never intermitting pains. My sins indeed deserve this, and more : but might I choose for the good of my soul, as I said (which I know thou dost favour,) I should, with submission to thy wisdom, desire some other kind of chastisement, and take leave to wonder at thy dispensation to me. But I am abundantly satisfied, and assured in myself, from thy immense wisdom and exceeding love, to which I heartily and cheerfully resign up myself, that even this is best for my soul, however unlikely it seems to me. Thy wisdom is above my shallow comprehension, and, therefore, to thee I sacrifice these glimmering sparks of my faint reason, and shall repose myself upon thy mighty love."

Another time, reflecting upon the sins which had been the effects of his sickness and affliction, he endeavours to quiet his mind, by proposing to it the more dangerous sins, which generally attend prosperity and health. " You see, O my soul," says he,

“ what sins sickness and affliction lead you to, (which indeed are ill, and the Lord in mercy grant me pardon for them,) but you do not see to how much greater health and plenty, freedom and applause, honour, and the good things of this world, would have brought you, had God vouchsafed them. It is not possible for thee to have a prospect of these; but from the wickedness of thy heart, thou mayest guess what would have become of thee, had he dealt with thee with a more bountiful hand, and as he does with some others. The child that dare sin, even under the rod, what would it have done in the midst of smiles ?

“ O let the consideration of those sins, from which the goodness of God has kept thee, make thee heartily contented with the way that he hath taken with thee; and exceedingly joyful with that condition, which hath been a means to thee of avoiding any one sin. It is a cursed delusion of the devil, who plunges souls in sin, that have begun to tamper with it: and draws them wholly away from God, who have wantonly turned a little out of the right path, by making them believe, that now their hand is in, they may go on; that since they have begun a score, it will not much increase their guilt, to gratify themselves in the next enjoyments: the sum of their guilt will be much the same, if having gone so far, they take the other satisfaction in also; the same repentance will serve to account for both, and the same humiliation to wipe out all, and this temptation seldom fails to carry it; especially when there is a strong party within, and a predisposition in our minds by former commissions. But, O my soul, let me know that it is infinite matter

of rejoicing to be saved from one sin ; that we, who bear upon God's patience by our commissions, should rather than displease him, suffer any thing, to avoid one evil. The contrary is the language of a heart alienated from God, and that has forgot the sweets of his favour : besides, the consequence is more fatal, and seldom terminates in one sin ; but increasing the enmity of our will towards God, disposes us afterwards to commit the same, and other sins, maliciously, and in a kind of defiance to him, which before we did out of weakness and childish infirmity. For the first sins which are committed by a child of God are innocent, in respect of the additional repetitions, which are committed on presumption of God's reconcileableness, and hopes of repentance : for this does two things ; it habituates the person to the sin, and makes him more powerfully disposed to it by a bodily and mental habit and inclination : and it raises in his mind a sense of greater guilt, and by consequence of God's displeasure ; the effect of which is, that he contracts an enmity to God ; for being habituated and inclined to his sin, and knowing, on the other side, that God is displeased with him for it, he likewise becomes angry with God, who stands in the way of his enjoyment and gratifying himself ; and this breeds enmity to God, which is the constant affection of a sinner, as love is of a saint ; and nothing more hardens our heart from returning to God, or concludes us in a state of sin, than this does ; because it makes us sin maliciously ; the breach is made wide, and reconciliation not easy ; and in the mean time, habit grows powerful, and they carry away the soul that is thus

estranged from God, with the same ease that a wolf devours a solitary sheep that is gone astray, and quite out of the sight of its shepherd. It is in the condition of the Israelites, when Moses was so long on the Mount; ‘As for this man, (and this God) who brought us out of Egypt, we know not what is become of them; up, let us make other gods.’

“Hear, O Lord my God, the humble request of thy unworthy servant, according as I unfeignedly desire to pour it out before thee; let me have grace to serve thee; let me be delivered from every sin, and all occasions of falling; let me have grace to wait upon thee with never ceasing diligence in well doing, in humble, constant, and earnest prayer; let me proceed in holiness, exemplariness, and all Christian graces; make me inwardly sound in respect to myself, and outwardly influential to all I converse with; that thy grace may be in my heart, and on my tongue, in my looks, and in my eyes, and shine bright in all my actions.

“Teach me, O my God, the wisdom of salvation, and let me understand thy will, and way of proceeding in dealing with my soul. In all my sufferings, I find that this gives me ease, and makes me able quietly to submit, while thou dost tell my soul, ‘It is my will thou shouldest thus suffer;’ for in submitting to thy will, I hope to please thee; and in gaining thy favour, I gain more than the world can make me lose. Farewell then all projects and vain contrivances; this is the will of my God; this must be best for my soul; here I will stay, and here will I submit.”

The great benefit of these severe trials from sick-

ness and other afflictions, he expresses in the following meditation, composed soon after the former.

“ O Lord, thou didst bring the wise heathen to the knowledge of thy Son, by the leading of a star: how early didst thou make them partakers of this great blessing! whose minds having duly improved their natural light, thou didst form by thy blessed Spirit to that degree of saving humility, that they were not offended at the meanness of our Saviour’s circumstances. Had not that exceeding great joy, where-with they were transported, when they saw the star conducting them to the place where our Saviour lay, buried all carnal affections in them, the pride of their heart would have made them flung back, as Naaman did from Elisha, saying, surely we thought to have found some great prince richly attended: and in despite of the heavenly signal, counted all but a delusion, and have refused to have submitted their reason to so great absurdities: but thou, O Lord, didst not only enlighten their eyes, but touch their hearts, and inflame their spirits with heavenly affections, so that when they saw the star, ‘ they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.’ Thou, O Lord, hast thought fit to afflict me in divers manners; in mercy, I trust for the good of my soul, that thou mayest not ‘ condemn me with the world:’ but, O gracious Lord, while I find my soul moved to thee by such chastisements, while I find each of them to have its natural and due effect upon my spirit, while I find my soul humbled by reproaches, my mind drawn off the world, and resigned to thee with humble and contented dependance at losses; while it is thus with me upon

each occasion; let men contemn and speak evil of me; let the news come of the loss of my estate, or other calamity, I shall rejoice, O my God, with exceeding great joy; because 'it brings me to the haven where I would be,' and to that temper of mind, which is more precious than all things upon earth. Indeed, while afflictions have not this due effect, they are like wandering fires, that lead my soul so much the more astray; but when they have, they are like this blessed star, that conducts me to my Saviour; whom when I find warming my soul with heavenly affections, I cannot but 'rejoice with exceeding great joy;' with joy, to find my Lord, while I lose the world: with joy to find my heavenly physick work kindly on my soul, and an eternal health springing up in it. O my God, so guide me, so conduct me, so prepare my soul, and temper my mind, that I may cheerfully follow the motions of thy blessed providence, and yield myself to the mighty workmanship of thy eternal Spirit."

There is another thing which I shall here take notice of, concerning Mr. Bonnell's early and happy progress in piety; which is, that as both at Cambridge and Mr. Freeman's he was a constant communicant, so his self-examinations for the sacrament were strict and severe. He began very early a most useful practice, which he continued during his whole life; and that was, upon every return of the holy sacrament, to put down in writing those thoughts which at that time most affected and entertained his mind. I have a good number of sacramental meditations composed by him, betwixt the twenty-first and twenty-seventh

years of his age: a time of life too commonly given up to sensuality and vanity. But here we see a young man, instead of indulging himself in folly and pleasure, bemoaning and confessing his sins, earnestly praying for grace to resist every temptation, and taking more pains to fit his soul for appearing at the Lord's table, than others at that age usually do to clothe and adorn their bodies. The following confession and prayer, written on Whitsun-Eve, in the twenty-sixth year of his age, will sufficiently confirm what I say.

“ O my God, I know I am unworthy, and I believe I am much more; I see my sins to be very great; but when thou shalt open mine eyes, (as I humbly entreat thee) I shall see them much greater. I, who had undertaken the highest degree of holiness, find myself not only to have come short of thy righteousness, but to have run too much the other way. It is true, thy merciful providence still raises me up, and sets me in the way of returning to thy favour; nevertheless my sins cease not to be such, nor confusion to overspread my soul. It is too much that I, whom thou hast fed with thyself, should do so: but too much that I should again present myself before thee, to have that honour repeated upon me, and I, with all my load of sin, to receive the assurances of being made for ever happy with thee. My soul flies back from this honour in the sense of my great unworthiness; but while methinks I hear thee cry to it, as thou didst to Peter, ‘ If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me,’ I dare not refuse: I resolve then to force myself into thy presence with all my blushes and my guilt,

knowing if thou dost not feed me, 'I have no part in thee : ' but, Lord, I must come in a dress fitting my condition ; not in a gaudy wedding robe, such as thy happy children triumph in ; but in a mourning veil, such as becomes one who is widowed of his innocence. Under this will I shroud myself, with this, will I hide my guilty blushes, while I wait upon thy solemnity. I will creep behind thee, my Saviour, and find out thy feet to wash with my tears ; and if I must needs partake of thy feast, it shall be only such crumbs as fall from thy table. I will not presume to reach my hand to the royal mess, nor serve myself with the glorious assurances of being united to thee for ever, who am such sinful dust and ashes : but for this time it shall be enough and too much for me to find that thou wilt be graciously ready to accept of me upon my repentance and amendment, avoiding all sin, and that there is a way open through the wounds of my Saviour for my admission to thy mercy. Lord, thou art privy to his whole discourse, and judgest the sense of my heart with which it is spoken ; O graciously pardon what thou seest amiss in it, more than I can discern, and according to the appearing integrity of it, to the utmost of what I myself can judge, be intreated by me, thy poor servant, to shew good unto me, and to strengthen me in thy ways, according as I (unfeignedly) desire to walk in them.

“ Lord, if such a wretch as I might have leave to expostulate with thee, if dust and ashes might have leave to speak to thy majesty, and a sinner to argue with his God ; since such desires to serve thee are agreeable to thy will, and pleasing in thy sight, and

since thou art of power sufficient to preserve those who are thus devoted to the height of their desires; why may not my humble prayers now be heard, that I may be so strengthened with thy grace from this moment, that I may proceed and go forward in all well-doing, from grace to grace, perfecting holiness in thy fear, and being never more guilty of any wilful sin against thee, my God! But thus have I humbly entreated of thy Majesty before, and with the like seeming sincerity, to my own sense, as I now do, yet hast thou thought fit to let me sometimes fall: looking forward, I see still that my life depends on thy favour; and that I must perish without thy divine upholding. What can I do more, than thus humbly to intreat thy Majesty; what can I do more than fly to thee, who I see hast the custody of all my ways? It is true, I am not to expect that any one prayer should last me for my whole life, or that this petition now, should acquit me from waiting upon thee each day for the same thing in due form: but canst thou refuse any one prayer that is faithfully poured forth before thee, in the name of thy dear Son, for a thing agreeable to thy will? Hear then this my humble request, O Lord, my God, according as I unfeignedly desire to pour it forth before thee: let me have grace to serve thee; let me be delivered from all sin and occasions of falling; let me have grace to wait upon thee with never-ceasing diligence in well-doing, with humble, constant, and earnest prayer; let me proceed in holiness, exemplariness, and all Christian graces; make me both inwardly sound in respect of myself, and outwardly influential to all I converse with; that

thy grace may be in my heart, and on my tongue, in my looks, and in my eyes, and shine bright in all my actions. Deliver me from temptations and offered occasions of falling, and may it please thee, for Jesus' sake, to establish my soul in such truth, as it may not go to seek out for itself opportunities of sinning, that it may be established in thy fear and thy love, and that I may be preserved evermore in perfect integrity and honesty of heart before thee my God. This is it which I humbly beg; and if I want faith, it is because I know myself unworthy to receive: but my humble request being agreeable to thy heavenly will, I am bold to assure my soul, I shall not go wholly without an answer. Amen."

Arrives in
Ireland,
and enters
upon his
office of
Accompt-
tant General.

In the year 1684, Mr. Bonnell leaving Mr. Freeman in France, came directly from thence into Ireland, and took his employment of Accomptant General into his own hands, which had been since his father's death managed by others for his use. This is an office of much business and great trust; in the discharge of which he was so remarkably diligent and faithful, so dexterous in dispatch, and so ready to oblige, that he soon equally gained the esteem of the government, and the love of all who were concerned with him.

Is desirous
to quit all
secular em-
ployments.

But as religion ever had the principal sway in his affections, so a mighty zeal for that, a contempt of this world, and a mind raised above its perishing concerns, had before this time given him strong desires of quitting all secular employments, and dedicating himself entirely to the

service of God ; it could be no worldly consideration which suggested that thought to him ; for the temporal advantages of his office, were greater than what he could have expected in a long time from any ecclesiastical preferment ; and his station was besides of sufficient dignity and credit But in things relating to God, “ he conferred not with flesh and blood,” and nothing hindered him from actually entering into holy orders, but the consideration that his employment was a great trust, and that he must render an account to God, not only for his discharge of it, but for the hands into which he should put it : a man of knowledge and sufficient skill, but chiefly who had established a character of piety and unshaken virtue, was what he wanted. And such an one, in the year 1688, he thought he had found ; and had actually agreed with him about it, being not a little rejoiced with the hopes of being soon freed from noise, and hurry, and worldly business ; and having nothing to do, but to take care of his own soul, and do good to the souls of others. But the news of the late Revolution changed that gentleman’s thoughts, and broke Mr. Bonnell’s measures.

His desires of entering into the ministry were of a very early date ; for I find that several attempts were made by his friends, during his residence in England, to procure him some settlement in the church there ; some of which might have succeeded, had he seconded his friends’ zeal by any endeavours of his own : but that he was so far from doing, that he reckoned it a great unhappiness to the church, that interest and

An enemy
to solicit-
ing for
prefer-
ment.

application had any share in the disposal of spiritual things. And when his friend Mr. Freeman, out of a sense of Mr. Bonnell's great merit, and the services he had done him, designed to have purchased the advowson of a benefice, that he might present Mr. Bonnell to it; he himself was the only person that opposed it, and so disappointed the kind intentions of his friend.

And it is probable that some endeavours of his friends, for his advantage, occasioned the following meditation, written in the year 1680, wherein we shall see what were his sentiments of soliciting for employments in the church; and what motives he proposes to himself, why he should, in all those affairs, cheerfully submit to the will of God, and acquiesce in his wisdom.

"I have often thought it," says he, "a great misfortune of some men, whose condition engages them in soliciting for preferment and places, which they often miss; and an unhappy effect of some employments, particularly in divinity. And I cannot but pity such men, whose employments almost necessarily engage them in such conflicts as seem very uneasy to flesh and blood, and very apt to shock a Christian temper; for to what is one carried more violently, than to grudge and hate a rival or competitor? to speak evil of him, when occasion is offered, and envy him if he succeeds? and what jealousies, what animosities, what heart-burnings, are commonly the effect of such debates; are naturally apt (without much struggling with one's self) to be produced by them? yet this, O my soul, will be made easy to

thee, if thou dost all with relation to God. If thou countest it thy only business in this world, to serve God; and considerest, that no service can be pleasing to him that is not submissive; for if I serve God but as I will myself, I cannot suppose it will be acceptable to him: wherefore I will desire no place, preferment, nor employment, to please myself, (especially in the church, but indeed no where else) but to serve God. If, therefore, I fail of any thing of this nature, for me to be dissatisfied, or envious, or angry, or the like, is as if I should proffer my service to a master, with great professions of humility and respect, to do such a piece of work, which he thinks fit to set another servant about, and I immediately fly out into the most unmannerly and undutiful expressions, both against one and the other. I cannot say that God wholly casts me out of his service; for wherever I am in this world, I am in it: all I wait for is, a change of duties; and if God thinks not fit to employ me in that way, if indeed I principally desire to serve him, as I profess, I ought to be far from being displeased.

“Fancy, O my soul, that thou hearest thy God thus speaking to thee: ‘My son, it is but a little time you will stay in this world; no matter how you are employed, so you do it faithfully and well: the greater the charge is, the greater duty, and the greater account will be expected: since by all your labour, you strive only to please me, you will do that more; by labouring according to my will, where I set you, than where you seek to place yourself. It will not be long before I shall take you to myself; in the meantime, the highest thing you can do to procure my

favour is, to do your duty where my providence shall place you. And if other things fail which you desire, or aim at, count that I think not fit to remove you, and let it satisfy you, because it pleaseth me.' Ah Lord ! perfect this important lesson in my heart, which I am beginning to learn, and thou to teach me ; and change me more and more by the power of thy grace, till I at last be transformed into the heavenly likeness of thy dear Son. Amen."

The following meditation, written when his thoughts were more particularly fixed upon the ministry, shews what were his sentiments of that sacred calling, and how necessary he judged a sincere intention to promote God's glory and the good of souls, to render us qualified for it, and useful in it. Here we may see what awful thoughts that good man had of that great and difficult work,—taking care of the souls of men ; and what a constant eye, all who design to be, or are engaged in that service, ought to have to God in the discharge of it, and how watchful they should be against the assaults of worldly interest and vanity.

" If we design," says he, " any work for the good of souls, we must take care that it be undertaken by God's permission and encouragement ; for we are not always competent judges of what is proper to this end, in particular cases : many things may seem, to our shallow reasons, to have a plausible tendency towards it, which God may not judge fitting : the temple had not been so fitting for God or his church's service, if built by David's hands. Therefore it is fit we should take his advice and direction (of his

word and providence,) in his own work, as to laying the design.

“ Next, in the carrying it on, we must from time to time lay the plummet to the work, and see that it squares with a right intention for God’s glory ; that every word be impregnated with a divine spirit, and pure zeal for the service of souls. For how can that be likely to do good to souls, which is only intended to shew our parts, or get ourselves esteem ? our own business indeed may be done by-the-bye, in pursuing of God’s ; but God’s business will not be done by-the-bye, in pursuing our own. All human affections are unhallowed in respect of God’s work, and pollute it by being mixed with it. They are the dead flies which corrupt this precious perfume of the sanctuary, and cause it to send forth an displeasing savour to God. ‘ See that thou do all things according to the pattern shewed thee in the Mount,’ said God to Moses, when he was about his sanctuary : we must look up to our pattern, in doing God’s work, his will and direction. In that we are not allowed to please ourselves, or follow our own fancy and invention. How can any thing that we do of ourselves, be able to benefit souls ? alas, it is as much beyond our power to benefit them, as it is to redeem them ; so we must let that alone for ever, unless the strength of God goes along with our weakness. One is the peculiar work of God the Son, the other of God the Spirit. Unless our words flow from his instinct, they are like to have but a dead force upon souls.

“ It is with the children of our brains, as of our

bodies; if they are not sanctified in the womb, they rarely come sanctified into the world. If we cannot say, 'Lord, let me have no children, rather than that they should not be thine,' we have little ground to assure ourselves that they will be his. Thus it is with the issue of our minds. If they are conceived in the Spirit, God will bring them home to the souls which he has loved; there they will find the same Spirit making way for them, and closing in with them, as tally answers to tally, and they shall effect the desired good.

"But if it be said, does not David complain, 'I was shapen in wickedness, and in sin hath my mother conceived me;' when then can there be such a holiness of conception, if even so holy a person as David had it not in his? it is true, the most pious parents have human frailties, and nothing is perfect on earth. Who can say, he hath made himself clean? who can say, his intention is so clear, that the eye of God can discern no spot in it? but this is not expected by God from us, who knows whereof we are made. In this case he accepts the desire of perfect sincerity, for perfect sincerity itself. Human nature is not free from mixture; but if this mixture be not so great as to darken the whole, and change the colour or property of it, that is, that the main intent should be for God's service and glory, he graciously overlooks it, and accepts it for perfect, more or less, according to the degrees of this mixture. There will be some little sallies of self-complacency, some little by-thoughts creeping in, to glean among God's sheaves; but if they be curbed as soon as discovered,

and the intention again set right, the work goes on orderly, and God accepts and approves it.

“ To conclude, upon the whole : Can I think that any thing I do will be able to do good to souls, unless God gives it his blessing ? and will he bless any thing that is not done wholly in his fear, with an eye continually looking up to him for his guidance and direction ? alas ! how unhandy creatures are we in God’s work, how apt to warp aside to worldly or self-ends ! It is not every forwardness of our own to go on with his work, which we are to esteem a call from him : the more forward we are many times, the more of self ends there is secretly lurking in the bottom of our hearts : but if I find myself at any time filled with a sincere zeal for God’s glory, and pious affections towards him, I may then go on with his work, he calls me to it : but if I find at any time the esteem of men, and the pleasure or good things of this world, to have a considerable relish or gust in my mind, and by consequence, my heart not so tenderly affected towards God, (as it will necessarily follow) then let me not offer to put my hand to his work, I shall pollute it. And so if my bodily temper unfits me, as God gives me other work to do, according to my duty in my station, then he calls me off from his work by his providence, and I must meekly submit to it, till he thinks fit to give me leave to take it up again. He thinks fit to put this *remora* to it, this rub in my way, and knows well why ; and I (if I rest satisfied in it) shall have the pleasure and glory another day of knowing the reason too.”

And even in the midst of all our confusions and

dangers in this kingdom, in the year 1689, Mr. Bonnell's desires of being employed in the immediate service of God continued the same, as the following prayer on his birth day, Nov. 14, 1689, will sufficiently shew.

“Thou hast granted me, O my Father, to be born on that day, in which those words of thy dear Son are appointed for the lesson, ‘I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me.’ As if thou didst design me this in common with him, to be sent into the world in some kind for thy work, and on thy errand: O that I may perform it in some measure with that delight and faithfulness which he did. O guide my way to it, and assist me in it: and let the business I have so much longed for, the service of souls, be the work of my life, and joy of my mind. Amen.”

His behaviour
in king James's
time.

During the late king James's reign, Mr. Bonnell discharged his office himself: and though he was one whom the party that then ruled could never hope to bring into their interests; yet so fully were they convinced of his abilities and faithfulness, that they never thought of removing him from his employment: for such an openness and sincerity shined in all his actions, such unshaken fidelity was his rule and guide, so known an enemy was he to faction and intrigue; that he was not only free from blame, but even suspicion; and the enemies of his religion revered his person.

He wanted not his share of those apprehensions which the state of these kingdoms (and of Ireland

in particular) raised in the minds of all true Protestants; he saw the clouds gathering, and expected and prepared for a storm: but the effects which these threatening dangers had upon him, were different from what they produced in the generality of men. For, instead of being dismayed at the prospect of them, instead of sinking under a load of fears, and despairing of deliverance, he considered the true end and great benefit of judgments; and what need most churches have of being awakened by corrections, who are too apt to be corrupted by prosperity, and lulled asleep by a long course of peace and safety. Therefore writing to his friend Mr. Strype, in the year 1686, he expresses himself thus. "The army is already changed, and God knows what an effect an ecclesiastical commission might produce in the church. I find our churchmen expect it. Our civil officers depend on the King's pleasure; among the rest, myself. I hope there is a happy time coming of weeding the church of England; and had rather, if it please God, bear my share in suffering, than that any scandalous persons should make it part of their character, to be of a church so truly resembling the primitive, if it might be made happy with a quickening discipline."

All that reign, his thoughts were very much employed in arming himself against those dangers which he saw approaching, and preparing for the severest trials. His private papers are full of excellent prayers and meditations, proper for a devout Christian in times of difficulty and distress. And he seems to have then laboured, more than at any time of his life

before, to disengage his affections entirely from this world, and bring his mind to such an indifferency to it, that he might not be at all solicitous about his fate here, but still be ready and willing to remove upon the first summons. It was then his daily work to fortify his soul with a noble faith in God, with true Christian courage and bravery, and the firmest resolutions of sacrificing all, even life itself, to God and his duty, should he be called to it.

And that he was thus employed, the two following meditations, (among many others of the same kind, which might be here inserted) composed in the year 1687, will sufficiently shew.

“ ‘The wicked,’ ” says he, “ ‘ flies when no man pursueth, but the righteous is bold as a lion.’ ” Grace reforms and changes nature: it makes the proud man humble; the furious man meek and patient; the luxurious man temperate and mortified: but can it also make a coward valiant? this seems to be so deeply rooted in our bodily frame, that without moulding us anew, it cannot admit of any alteration. And on the other hand, men that are naturally stout, though never so vicious, still retain their courage. How then shall we understand this sentence of the Wise Man? either, we must conceive it of wicked and righteous men, who have naturally equal degrees of courage; and then in case of terror, see who is the bravest man; or else we must take it in case of public calamities, when God visits; then the wicked tremble as a leaf, but the righteous is bold as a lion. Fear is a great sin in a good man; for why should he fear, who has the Lord of hosts for his shield, and most sure pro-

tector? 'His heart standeth fast and believeth in the Lord; his heart is established and will not shrink; he is not afraid of any evil tidings; nor of any terror or amazement. Though the earth be moved, and though the hills be carried into the midst of the sea, yet will he not fear.' These are the characters of the good man. Faith, that removes mountains, works this change also, and makes women and children out-brave death and tyrants in their cruelest forms. It is only want of faith, of believing in the Lord, that makes good men fear. Peter, who had ventured out where never man went before, when he saw the waves arise, was afraid. Our Saviour gives the reason, 'O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?' I believe that, 'Except the Lord keep the house, the watchman waketh but in vain;' I believe that God is my keeper in the way of my lawful calling and abode; if I fear, I either do not believe, or do not believe enough. If it be his will to give me up to the violence of evil men, wherefore should I fear his will? we fear only for something we are fond of: the good man has given up all his earthly concerns to God. If I am still afraid for any of these, and think this fear only an innocent and unavoidable infirmity of my nature, I mistake; for it is a certain proof that I am still fond of what I pretend to have given up to God; it is a contradiction to my profession, and a manifest sin. But if, as I said, it be the will of God, to give me up to the violence of evil men; my body, my goods, or my life; why should I be afraid of the will of God, which is full of goodness and kind intentions towards me? if it be not his will, I know all the

powers of earth and hell cannot hurt me. I will lay me down, therefore, in peace, and take my rest, for thou, O Lord, only makest me dwell in safety. I will repose myself under the shadow of thy divine pleasure, and in it will I find a sure retreat, though my body and all my earthly concerns be given up to violence."

The other meditation is as follows :

"In time of wealth and prosperity God requires us to watch and be sober ; to keep the world at a distance from our affections ; to live in it, but not to live to it ; to be reasonably pleased with it, but not to deat on it. But there is a time when he requires us to be utterly estranged from it ; when the dispute is not about enjoying it more or less, but about quitting it altogether. When we are to have ' the loins of our minds girt up,' as the Israelites had their bodies, the night they were to go out of Egypt ; when we are to be as indifferent to life, or this world, as they were to the land they were leaving ; when we are to put our lives into our hands, and not love them to death : and this time is, when such a case happens, as we find mentioned in Revelation xiii., when we have our choice to worship or die ; no way to escape death, but by a sinful compliance ; when none but they ' whose names are written in the book of life, and have ears to hear, of all that dwell upon the earth, shall refuse to worship the beast, or its image. When power is given to it, to fight against the saints, and to overcome them ; then is the time for the patience and faith of the saints. This is the time when there is to be no parleying with the world ; it must

not come into our thoughts ; we must either resist bravely, and save our lives by losing them, or die for ever. We may observe more severe and lively expressed punishments denounced against such sinful compliance, than against all the immoralities and sins reproved in holy writ. Thus Rev. xiv. 9, 10, 11. ‘ If any man worship the beast and his image, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God which is poured out without mixture, in the cup of his indignation ; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb : and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever ; and they have no rest day and night : ’ and the reason is, because the temptation is greater to this than any other sin ; and, therefore, it is balanced with greater terrors, to arm us against it. The dispute here is not about resisting some little temptation, from which we might hope to recover ourselves again, and repent ; but about resisting a sin, that can never be repented of ; about parting with life and all at once, or falling for ever. And on the other hand, as the terror is great ; so God stands by, heartening his own soldiers, and encouraging them to quit the world resolutely, and die bravely. Ver 12, 13. Here is the patience of the saints, here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. ‘ And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Blessed are the dead that die in (or for) the Lord, even so saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours, and their works shall follow them. And they sing the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb.’ Chap. xv. 3. The triumphal

song after the overthrow of Pharaoh, and the Lamb's triumphal song after his glorious resurrection, when he ceased from his labours, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

By such exercises as these, Mr. Bonnell was very well fitted for whatever could befall him; and he took the true way to make dangers not only tolerable but easy, by flying to Him for succour, who can either give safety, or enable us to bear trouble; can remove the rod, or sweeten its pains. Nor was he less earnest in his prayers for the removal of those calamities he saw falling upon the church, than careful to fit himself to bear his own share of them. And we have reason to bless God, that he (among other religious persons) was then devoutly employed in fervent addresses to God for his church and our holy religion; since we may reasonably believe that their pious intercessions shortened our troubles, and preserved us under them. Such public blessings are the devout and religious, since to their prayers, even the wicked owe their peace and safety!

And how constant, how earnest his prayers in those days of trouble were, the following meditation will shew.

November,
1687. "If it should please God to let this storm blow over us which now hangs so black, and turn his judgments into a blessing; I should not be capable of any comfort from such a happy day, if I should reflect that I had not performed my part in praying earnestly to God for such a blessing. They only that sow in tears shall reap in joy: if I have no part in that holy sowing, I

shall look upon myself to have no share in that happy harvest. I shall be like the sullen Samaritan lord, who would not believe the prophet's word. I shall see the plenty with my eye, but not be suffered to taste of it. If persons join together for an adventure, and put in their stocks; surely the gain, when it returns, shall be divided between them, and a stranger shall not intermeddle with their profit. Good people are now stirring up themselves to join earnestly together in prayer, for a removal of the judgments that threaten us; and surely if I join not with them with my humble prayers, I shall see a blessing falling into their bosoms; I shall see it, and look sad, and go away empty."

And as Mr. Bonnell saw danger coming on, with a very composed mind, so his apprehensions did not grow greater at the near approach it. For I find in his private papers, an account of his behaviour, when this kingdom was universally alarmed at the report of a massacre, designed to have been acted upon the ninth of December, 1688. This news astonished the Protestants every where, particularly in Dublin, and great multitudes fled in confusion to the sea-side to escape, as they best could, for England. What share Mr. Bonnell had in these fears, and how quickly he got the better of them, what now follows will best shew, writ that very day of terror and disorder when the impressions, which a common danger might raise in the best resolved mind, would probably be strongest.

His behaviour upon the breaking out of the late troubles.

"How inconstant are human things: blessed is the soul that has his hope fixed

December 5, 1688.

on thee, O Lord. Last Thursday the letter threatening the massacre of all the English on this day, came to town; and people not receiving such satisfaction from the Lord Deputy as they expected, began to think of England, and multitudes flocked away. I went myself to Rings-end, thinking if there were any alarm, I was nearer to take shipping; I had the duties of my place upon me, and no leave to go: therefore I would not go, unless in case of extremity, when no duty could be attended on. If I desired to follow the direction of God, and to watch and observe the guiding of his providence in every lesser affair of my life, surely I should do it in the most important one, my life itself; for if I may presume any thing relating to me to be his care, this no doubt is. Now the index of his will is his providence; and of his providence, is my duty: this is the star that points out to me the course I am to take. If I am discharged from my duty, I may expect God's protection in going from hence; if not, in staying here. While I waited at Rings-end, uncertain in my resolutions, I remembered a verse of the first lesson at last night's prayers, which then I took notice of, but forgot it in the hurry of going away, Isaiah xxx. 15. 'In returning and rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be your strength.' God requires of us a confident reliance on him, in the station wherein he sets us, a quiet doing of our duty: and he promises his safeguard to such. I thought, therefore, I would return, and put myself into his hands, and endeavour quietly to compose myself to await his pleasure. Instead of hurrying about to enquire of

news, I would retire myself to my God, and settle matters between him and my soul. Behold I am come, O my God, hide not thyself from thy servant in the day of danger. O shut not out thyself from me this day, when the matter in debate is my appearing before thee for ever. I have deserved, I must humbly acknowledge, that thou shouldest withdraw thy grace and favour from my soul. But cast not away, O Lord, all thy past favours, and let them not be lost upon me. Pardon, for thy tender mercies, my unworthiness of them, and awaken my soul to behold thee, that thy presence may purify it from all the dross it has contracted by conversing in the world, and fit it for thyself. Lord, thou lovest to succour in distress ; nothing is so pleasing to generous love, as to rescue from danger those whom it is pleased to favour. For what sentiments does this awaken in an ingenuous heart ! who can but adore that watchful love, which seasonably comes in to its preservation ! this then, O Lord, is my humble confidence in thee ; for I not only hope for deliverance from thee, but that thou wilt make this deliverance a means to my soul of returning to thee love and praises for ever. But, O my God, instruct my soul to remove all difficulties that lie in the way of thy mercy ; that every corrupt affection may be done away, which hinders my approach to thee ; and I may make my peace with thee, my God, by the methods thou hast prescribed, even humiliation and sorrow, and earnest calling upon thee. We are not to think but that even this terror is a judgment from thee. O pardon, gracious Lord, the sins that have more immediately provoked it ; even our

not having laid to heart, so much as we should, the terrors of thy soul, O most gracious Lord Jesu, which thou didst undergo for our sakes, 'when thy soul was sorrowful even unto death, and cried out, Father, save me from this hour:' by thy terrors, O Lord, sanctify this thy judgment, and let us always love to meditate on thy agony for our sakes. Amen."

I find another excellent meditation of his upon the same public troubles, composed by him, December 22, 1688, when our fears and distractions were at the greatest height; and which I shall here give the reader, that he may see how Mr. Bonnell, by a firm confidence in God, secured the peace of his own mind in that general disorder; and may learn the way to be safe and happy, should God send the same calamities upon us.

"Isaiah xxx. 15. 'Thus saith the Lord, the holy one of Israel, in returning and rest ye shall be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be your strength : ' In returning from your solicitous cares, and anxious fears, and vain projectings for your escape and safety. The time you bestow upon these, to how much better purpose would it be laid out in waiting upon me, and imploring my aid and protection, who am so easily able to defend you? and this is the reason why in time of danger, I require your resting in quietness and confidence in me: because if I think fit not to give you deliverance, this fits your souls for myself, to enjoy me in a much better condition. But if I send deliverance, this makes you know that it comes from my hand, and disposes you to make me thankful returns for it. They that in danger do not dispose themselves to a

dependence on God, and confidence in him, if deliverance comes, they are apt to impute it to an arm of flesh, or to chance, and the revolution of things. But those souls that quiet themselves in God, and with an humble confidence depend wholly on his power and readiness to help them, if it be his will; see plainly that what deliverance they obtain, is wrought by his hand; this makes them prize the mercy, and praise him for it. 'O my God, I see many of thy servants, in conscience of their duty, expose themselves to hazard in this place; I have also a duty here; thy providence has continued it to me; the present season indeed does acquit me from attending it for some time; but should I not by removing, be a discouragement to thy servants, who are obliged to stay here? Lord, thou hast ordered and governed my whole life hitherto, and every circumstance of it; I know I am now under thy protection and care; I know thou art not unmindful of me, (pardon my unworthiness to assure myself so,) O keep my eyes steadfast upon thee, and upon the indications of thy will and providence, that I may not be forward to do any thing of my own head, least I put myself out of the way of thy mercy and protection. The people in the wilderness were not to stir until the cloud began to remove before them. Let me attend the motions of thy providence with a constant eye lifted up to thee; if thou callest me from hence, (by any providence) let me go in obedience to thy will. If thou requirest me to stay here, and bear thy good servants company, (for thy suffering servants are the purest of thy flock,) let me stay in obedience to the same will, and dispose

myself to bear with them the issues of thy pleasure upon us; that we may glorify thee by life or by death, or whatsoever thou shalt ordain to us. Hear me, O gracious Lord, in the multitude of thy mercies, and prepare my heart for thy will, and to receive the decrees of thy infinite wisdom concerning me; prepare me always for thy holy presence; and whether I live or die, let me be ever thine. Grant the same mercy to all thy distressed servants in this place; and as thou hast visited us with one common trouble, so unite us in thy fear, and make us partake of the same grace and mercy: Lord, be glorified in us, and let our souls find acceptance with thee, through the beloved our Lord Jesus Christ and only advocate. Amen."

And lest any inward remorse might shock his dependance upon God, I find him about that time particularly diligent, to set all matters right between God and his soul, that being the true foundation of confidence in public troubles. To this purpose is the following meditation, written upon Christmas-Day in the morning, that very year of disorder and confusion.

"God hath said, 'In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.' But who can have confidence in God? St. John hath told us, 'He whose heart condemns him not.' And who is the happy man, whose heart condemns him not? St. Paul, by a reasonable inference, tells us, 'He that alloweth not himself in any thing which he condemneth,' (Rom. xiv. 22.) 'Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.' And again, Heb. x. 18, 19. 'Where there is remission of sins, we

have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus;’ because ‘the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin,’ 1 John i. 7. So then the pardon of our sins gives us this confidence in God. Come, O my soul, let us go to the blood of Jesus, that we may be cleansed by it; that our body may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed by his precious blood: that we may obtain this confidence, our only means of strength and support in this time of danger.”

The effect of these exercises was a resolution of not attempting to remove from Dublin during the war, whatever dangers might threaten him there. He had quite different notions of the means of safety, from the generality of the world, as you may see by the following meditation, written not long after the former.

“It is not always the most fancied place for security is indeed the most secure. The remnant of Judah, after the captivity, thought Egypt most secure. Whereas abiding in the place where they were, would have been most secure for them. And the reason is, because it is God only can make any place secure to us. And a quiet confidence in him, arising from an humble walking with him, is the only means to engage him to secure our abode to us. If, because of the present distress, St. Paul advised the Corinthians not to marry, that they might better ‘attend upon the Lord without distraction,’ (1 Cor. vii. 35.) the same reason will hold against projecting removals, as a thing likely to distract our thoughts in distressed times, when we most need to have them recollected

and stayed upon God ; to be every minute composed and ready to lay hold on his hand at the appearance of danger."

Thus armed with confidence in God, Mr. Bonnell waited the issue of our common dangers : and as he put himself into God's hands, so from God he had safety and protection, and even liberty during all our

troubles. He was continued in his employment without his desiring it, and it was happy for many Protestants that he was so ; since whatever he received

out of it, he distributed among them with a liberal hand. He sought out opportunities of relieving his needy brethren, and went about doing good to the necessitous and oppressed. He boldly pleaded for them to those who were then in power ; and ventured, without concern, interest, favour, and even his necessary subsistence, (so courageous does piety and charity make men) to get the injured Protestants relieved.

And indeed, as bounty to the poor was one of those virtues which always shined eminently in him, though none more industrious to conceal it than he ; so I find him in more places than one, offering arguments to himself why he should, in those times of distress, be more large in his alms than he used to be at others. I shall here insert two meditations exciting to charity, one written in the year 1688, the other in 1689.

The first is as follows :

" ' Man lives not by bread alone ; ' much less by gold and silver ; for bread may maintain one, when money cannot keep from starving ; ' but by every word of God,' by his favour and blessing ; it is his com-

mand, and giving the blessing, that makes any thing effectual to sustain us. And his command can make what is left as effectual to sustain thee, as what thou hast given away, and much more added to it, would have been. But without his command, what abundance can sustain thee? the rust and the canker will eat it up, and thy riches will make themselves wings, and fly away from thee. Insure then thy stock in a time of trouble and danger, in the great insurance office in heaven. It will be done at a reasonable rate, and all the world cannot give thee such security of being answered as thou wilt find there. Thou wilt certainly find thy principal here or hereafter with an hundred fold. It is infallibly certain as God is true; as God is God, thou mayest depend upon it."

The other meditation was written June 19th, 1689.

"This day being the public fast-day in England for this kingdom, had for its second lesson in the morning, Luke iii. wherein is remarkable John Baptist's discourse to the people: 'The axe is laid to the root of the tree:' Now no longer to be forborne, either immediately to bring forth good fruit, or to be cut down: and to the people, demanding what they should do; his answer is, 'He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.' Teaching us, that in a time of public trial, when matters are come to extremity, and God arises to judgment against a people, works of mercy and charity are most likely to prevail for a blessing; either to the turning away the public scourge, or saving particular persons from the general calamity. And are not works of mercy at

such times particularly reasonable? For what signifies keeping of superfluities, when we know not how long we shall live to use them? or if we live, is it not better to give them now to those that need them, than to keep them to be taken away by such as will only destroy them!"

Though Mr. Bonnell bore his own share of the calamities of that time, with a very calm and serene mind; yet there was one thing that gave him no small disturbance, and that was, our troubles not producing that reformation among Protestants which might have been expected while the rod was upon them, though no doubt, a great many were very much bettered by it. What his sense of these things was, will sufficiently appear by the ensuing meditation, composed on Whit-Sunday, 1689.

"To have a heart full of concern for the glory of God and the souls of men; to see the world lie in wickedness and ignorance of God, and not be able to remedy it; is it not an uncomfortable state? but to be filled with a divine power and ability to work upon the hearts of men, to convince them and bring them off from this sin and ignorance, as the apostles were by the coming down of the Holy Ghost, can any thing be a greater comfort? to force the world to believe the truth of what they witnessed, and acquit them from being deceivers, is it not an exceeding comfort? but how is this comfort fulfilled to us? we see a world, in which we are, lying in wickedness; the judgments of God gone out against it, and yet the inhabitants of it do not learn righteousness; God seems resolved to reform or cut us off, and yet little

reformation appears. And what can those now do, who see this state of our age, who see it, and see themselves without power to help it? who see the wickedness of the world, and cannot snatch men out of the fire? where is the Lord God of Elijah? where is the promise of the Comforter, so plentifully fulfilled to the blessed apostles of our Lord? where is this double portion of his Spirit that descended on them? is not the promise, 'He shall remain with you always?' Lord God, these are thy flock now, as much as they were of old; thy people and the sheep of thy pasture, though they have gone astray, though they refuse to be reclaimed. O comfort thy servants with power to call home these wanderers from thee, and bring them into thy fold: to convert the unrepenting world, to turn many to righteousness, and cover a multitude of sins. Amen."

When in the progress of the war, the Protestants in Dublin were denied the exercise of their religion; their churches turned into prisons, and their ministers confined: Mr. Bonnell deeply lamented those sins which brought down that which he accounted the severest of God's judgments; and endeavoured to supply the want of the church's public prayers by the greater constancy and fervour of his private devotions. Thus June the 25th, 1690, a few days before the victory of the Boyne, he expressed the sorrows and devotion of his soul in the following meditation.

"Justly, O Lord, for our negligence in thy worship and service, dost thou shut us out from the liberty of meeting together to celebrate it. Yet even

this, I trust, will turn to good, to those that fear thee, in making them more zealous and fervent in praying to thee in private; and afterwards, that thou wilt give them grace to redeem the faults they have been guilty of, by greater fervency in public, when thou shalt graciously restore to us the liberty of it. But, Lord, we are not better than thy servants, who are totally deprived of these means. (Ah! that it is not to be said how far we may be worse than they;) why then should it be presumed that thou wilt deal with us so much more graciously than thou hast thought fit to do with them? we are in thy hands, and have deserved no good from thee. Justly mayest thou deprive us of the liberty and exercise of our religion. But then, let not the extraordinary supplies of thy grace be wanting to us: for thou canst work without means as well as with them; and even this severe dispensation of thy providence will be turned to a mercy to all of us, if it puts us upon repentance for all our abuses of that great freedom of thy holy ordinances, which thou hast so long indulged to us; for our irreverent, careless, undevout behaviour in thy worship; for our pleasing ourselves in other things, in our coming into thy house of prayer, besides meeting and serving thee our God. If it help us to repent of these abuses of thy house here, before thou take us to thy house in the heavens; and if it fills us with hungerings and thirstings, and longings after those opportunities of serving thee, which we have too slightly valued hitherto; thou mayest make even a total deprivation turn to a greater blessing to us, as I trust thou wilt do, if thou

shalt think fit so to deal with us, than the freest enjoyment. Thou knowest how to conduct thy servants to thyself; for this is the end of all their travails; O let this aim fill our souls, and we shall unconcernedly leave to thee the ordering of the things of this world, which we have done with."

But these calamities were soon over, and succeeded by all that joy which long wished for liberty, safety and peace, could give. One general release discharged all our prisoners; and our churches again returned to their true use, and became houses of prayer. And as Mr. Bonnell had always expressed his sorrow in penitential complaints and fervent prayers to God, so now his joy turned all to praises. But how different were his reflections upon that surprising turn of affairs, from those of most others, who shared in the deliverance it gave! as different, it is to be feared, as his behaviour had been before. The mutual caresses of the Protestants, after their new-gained freedom, he improved to the noblest purposes, thence to raise his mind to heaven, and contemplate those endearments, that seraphic love and joy which shall fill the souls of the faithful at their meeting in that happy place.

"How did we see," says he, "the protestants on the great day of our Revolution, Thursday the third of July, (a day The day of Dublin's deliverance. ever to be remembered by us with all thankfulness; O had it been begun with visiting our churches, and presenting ourselves there to God our deliverer,) congratulate and embrace one another as they met, like persons alive from the dead! like brothers and sisters

meeting after a long absence, and going about from house to house, to give each other joy of God's great mercy; enquiring of one another how they past the late days of distress and terror! what apprehensions they had; what fears or dangers they were under: those that were prisoners, how they got their liberty, how they were treated, and what from time to time they thought of things.

“ O that this may be a happy type to us, as it is as lively an emblem as this world can give, of the joyful meeting of the servants of God in heaven at the great day of jubilee; when all the terrors of death and judgment shall be over, and Christ our great deliverer shall have put all our enemies under his feet. How will they then embrace and congratulate for their escape from all their terrors and fears! how will they welcome one another into that blessed and secure abode of eternal peace and joy! how may we suppose, will they enquire of one another, how they past through those days wherein they were parted! what difficulties they met with in life, after the others had left them! with what apprehensions or terrors they past through their last agony! and what comforts or supports they had under it! one will say, I remember you were a prisoner, in bondage to sin, and under the slavery of divers lusts; how were you set free? how did you conquer those great and stubborn enemies we left you conflicting with? I remember, to another, you were with child in those days, loaded with the incumbrances of the world, the cares of getting and keeping riches, and providing for a family, in a degree above what was necessary,

either for their happiness or your state. To another, you were on the bed of sickness in the time of this alarm, oppressed with distracting crosses, domestic disturbances, foreign enemies and oppressions, inward pains and diseases ; how did you get through all your infirmities ? how did you escape, who were not able to stir from the bed ? with joy, each will reply, God did all this for us."

After this manner did Mr. Bonnell improve that great deliverance ; and so much did religion possess his thoughts, that (as I find from his papers) it was his usual practice, from the daily occurrences of the world, and the most familiar affairs of life, to draw such reflections, as might best keep his mind in a devout frame, and confirm him in his duty.

But his share in that general joy was soon abated, from two causes ; the one particular to himself ; the other, of more public concernment. The death of his mother was his particular cause of grief, which he heard of by the first letters that came from England, and which he lamented with true religious sorrow. He bore her the tenderest respect, as well as greatest love ; for she had done every thing for him which natural fondness, or religious concern, could suggest ; and he was sensible of all his obligations to her, from duty and gratitude, as well as nature. His meditations upon her death, (too long and particular to be here inserted) shew a spirit truly afflicted for such a loss ; yet submitting without murmur to the will of God, the greatest love to his parent, yet greater to Him who had taken her away.

His other cause of trouble, and what touched him

He laments as sensibly as any loss could do, was the little reformation which the judgments of God had wrought in this kingdom. He reasonably expected, that those who had lamented the want of their churches, should throng to them with joy, when they were restored to them, and praise God continually for that great mercy: that unity and love should universally prevail among those who were not only professors of the same religion, but had been fellow-sufferers for it; but that disputes, contentions, and revenge, should be forever done away. But when he saw our troubles succeeded by a torrent of vice, and the rod no sooner removed, but God, who had appointed it, by too many forgotten; when he saw immorality and prophaneness conquer as fast as our victorious arms; and that the same army that delivered us, did corrupt us too; so melancholy a prospect did very much move him, raised many sad thoughts in his mind, and made him conclude, the time of our complete deliverance was not yet come.

The following meditation, written July 3, 1690, will express his sense of these things, and particularly shew how he lamented the violent behaviour of some Protestants, immediately upon their deliverance.

“ I see now plainly, that it is from the unchristian enmity and spite against one another in this kingdom, that the judgment of the sword is sent upon it so much oftener than on other places; and that once every forty years we must expect a commotion. Perhaps commotions may happen as often in frontier

places, which lie between two countries; and for the same reason, because they consist of mixed people : and this vice being most apt to happen between such, God punishes it periodically, by letting its natural effect take place. I look upon it as incurable in this kingdom, while it consists of different people ; for all the laws of Christianity will not reform it, because the greatest part of mankind are not guided by those laws. If ever it could have been mended, surely it would now, on the Protestant side, when for above a year and a half, we have been learning our religion in the best school, that of discipline ; when the whole Protestant cause has been at stake, and others have led us the way in the severest sufferings. To see now a company of men, that call themselves Protestants, committing the same outrages that Roman Catholics had done before ; to start up from the midst of slavery to the height of violence and injustice : what made these men be at the pains to call themselves Protestants at this time ? why did they not profess any religion since they had none ? certainly for no other reason, but because it pleased God that our pressures were not extreme, and that they looked that the Roman Catholic cause could not long stand on foot in these kingdoms. Some religion they were used to ; or rather, they were used to call themselves by some names, and enlist themselves under some faction ; which they adhered to, because people love to gratify the humour of opposing others. There is something pleasing in it to carnal minds. Thus, O almighty Lord God, thou punishest each sin with a viper bred out of its own bowels. O that men may

fear thee, and learn to be wise at last! but how few find the way of this light! to how few does this slender and bright beam dart itself; instead of breaking open our church doors this day, with the first dawn of it, to praise thy stupendous and amazing mercy to us, we ran together into herds, we met in crowds to arm ourselves, as if there were no way but this to keep the enemy from returning back upon us; when it was thou alone, O Lord, who, without any arms of ours, hadst driven them from us.

“ Ah, Lord! lay not this sin to our charge; after having so long cried unto thee, thou hast graciously delivered us; after having lost our churches, thou hast now allowed us the free use of them. Thou hast driven away our enemies, as it were with a strong wind, and the rumour only of a pursuing army last night, though none drew nigh: that thou mightest make us see, that our deliverance is from thee our God, on whom we have waited. What a dream did this night seem to us; we found ourselves all in quiet; we could hardly believe that we were delivered. We rose up early to see if it could be true that our deliverance was real. Oh! pardon us, that we have not first visited our churches, the monuments of thy mercy, which thou hast so graciously continued to us during all these troubles, and been so gracious to us in them; and having taken them away so little a while, dost now so speedily restore them to us. Oh! pardon us, that we can pass by so great a mercy! that we can meet in councils and in courts, and fill the streets with our crowds, and leave these monuments of thy goodness neglected, as if some en-

chanted force kept their doors against us. Oh pardon us, good Lord, and let not this sin redound upon all of us, whom thou hast delivered. For is not this to 'fly on the spoil, and eat the flesh with the blood?' (1 Sam. xiv. 32.) When without sanctifying our victory, without paying our homage to thee for it, before thy altars, we run so greedily upon enjoying the fruits of it; and that in a tumultuous and injurious manner, to those whom thou hast put in our power."

Soon after this, I find him lamenting the decay of piety, and prevalency of vice; these were always matter of grief and indignation to his mind; but chiefly after our great deliverance, when the vilest ingratitude was a new aggravation of every sin. His sense of these things the following meditation will shew; written August 17, 1690.

"How do I fear that the standard of piety is lost in the world, and of that holiness, 'without which no man shall see the Lord!' I know Christ will uphold his church, and the Holy Spirit will be with it in every age to the end. And, therefore, even in this age, he has his faithful servants. But I fear they are so few, and the number of others so great, that either they are not taken notice of in the crowd; or that people are so hardened and blinded, that seeing they do not see, and hearing they will not understand; but choose rather to look upon these as men of unnecessary severities, than such as keep up the model of the gospel. By this means, we in this generation may well be all pigmies in grace, and hardly any of us come up 'to the measure of the stature of Jesus

Christ ;' but measuring ourselves by one another, may think ourselves proper Christians. Where do we see piety practised in all its parts, private, domestic, and public ? some few, that are much conversant in good books, and primitive accounts of things, may have an idea of Christianity, beyond what this age could give them : but then how easy is it for the corruption of the age we live in, to make this be forgotten, or hinder it from being brought down to practice ; piety is rarely learned wholly by books ; we need continual examples, and the conversation of good people, to bring these notions into practice. The reason of this seems to be, that piety always decays in the peace of the church. A good man, that lives in the continual prospect or apprehension of death, is quite another thing from the same good man that lives out of this prospect. When the whole church, therefore, lives continually in this apprehension, (as was the state of the primitive church for the first three hundred years after Christ) no wonder if it be quite different in the measure and exercise of piety from the church at other times. It is true, they were not always under actual persecution ; but then it must be considered, that for some time after God frees men from this hard state, the sense of their former troubles leaves a deep impression upon their minds. They had contracted firm habits of strict and pious living ; and the first freedom that God gave them from their fears, did not make them relax any thing of their strictness ; but only encreased their thankfulness, and more cheerful serving him in their former road, till God thought fit to bring again their former straits upon

them, by a renewed persecution. And so it was for a while after God put a final end to their persecutions, by the Emperor Constantine's becoming a Christian. With what zeal did the Christians flock to the public churches, consecrated from heathen fanes to temples of the living God, and cover the pavements with their prostrate bodies? but by degrees this fervour decayed; lukewarmness and worldliness crept into the church, and has been ever since striking its roots deep into it, to this very day; the whole Christian Church having never since suffered any general persecution. It has pleased God sometimes to afflict particular churches, and rouse them up; but this has been so little general, that we may well fear that the spirit of religion is almost decayed in the world: and as nothing but a great persecution, in human appearance, can awaken it, so in the mean time we know not where to look for it; but have reason to fear, that if we think it enough for us to be as good as our neighbours, we shall come short at last of the kingdom of heaven. Alas! it is the easiest thing that can be, to go to heaven according to the notion of the men of the world now. At their rate who will be damned? but surely there must be two heavens at great distance the one from the other: one for the superficial Christians of this age, and another for the pious and painful, the mortified and religiously strict Christians of old; or else these superficial Christians can go to no heaven at all."

To both these I shall add a prayer of his upon his birth-day, November 14, 1690; and though only part of it falls in with what went before, yet no doubt the

pious reader will be sufficiently pleased with the whole.

“ O most high and glorious Lord God ! who hast made me and given me such great capacities, even to be able to love thee : I was nothing when thou wert pleased to give me a being, and am nothing yet, but what thou shalt be pleased to make me. Thou orderest and disposest of me with the tenderness of a father, and with infinite wisdom : sometimes thou hast vouchsafed me leisure, and the quiet enjoyment of thyself ; at other times, thou hast filled me with hurry and business, and with cares, if not so much hurrying, yet more distracting than either. Sometimes thou hast granted me health, a cheerful temper, and the sense of thy love ; at other times thou hast left me no more than the bare remembrance of these enjoyments, to carry on my soul in the unrelishing discharge of my duties. But as thy wisdom produces strong trees from tender plants, by bringing them through the vicissitudes of day and night, of summer and winter, and leaving them sometimes stript of all their leaves in the very shadow of their death, making these changes the necessary means of their growth and solidness ; so thou hast instructed me hereby, not to wonder at thy appointing such changes to my soul : but in them all, to bless and adore thee, and to make it my business, in whatever state I am, to endeavour to go on to serve thee. When last I began my yearly collections of this sort, thou hadst shut me up, and thy servants, in this place, in distress and terrors : we are now, by thy mercy, freed from dangers, yet involved in new troubles : delivered from judg-

ments; yet oppressed with old sins. Good God ! what will become of us ? why should we be stricken any more ? we will revolt more and more. Surely thy exterminating sentence will next go out against us, and make us cease to be a people, since we will not cease to be a wicked one.

“ But, O most gracious governor and guide of my whole life, shut not up my soul with those who will not be reformed : enable me to reform myself, and then vouchsafe to make use of me for thy glory, in the way thy wisdom has ordained for me : O thou, who hast known me before I was, and made me what I am. Amen.”

These apprehensions of the decay of piety, stirred up anew in Mr. Bonnell's mind, his former desires of betaking himself entirely to the service of God, and quitting all secular business. In order to this, he entered into a firm resolution of parting with his employment, so soon as he could find one upon whom, with an easy mind, he might devolve so great a trust ; and in a little time he actually agreed with a gentleman of sufficient abilities for it. But that gentleman's delays first, and afterwards his resolutions of living constantly in England, kept Mr. Bonnell much longer engaged in his employment, than he could possibly have expected. But at last he was freed from it by a new agreement which he made with the gentleman who now enjoys it, but even so, much time was spent before he could be settled in it.

Resolves again to quit his employment.

While this tedious affair was transacting, Mr. Bonnell changed his condition of

His marriage.

life, and entered into a married state, which he did in the latter end of the year 1693. The person he made choice of was Jane Conyngham, a daughter to Sir Albert Conyngham ; a gentleman very well known in this kingdom, for his firm adherence to the Royal Family during the civil wars ; in whose cause he often exposed his life to the greatest dangers ; and for his bravery and conduct in the late war, commanding a regiment of dragoons, and at last dying in the service. Mr. Bonnell had some years before entered into a strict friendship with this gentlewoman. He believed her temper and manner of life very well suited to his own, and that she had those qualities which he chiefly desired in a wife. And as this was an affair of the greatest moment to him of any in this world ; so I have those materials in my hands, which shew, that with all imaginable constancy and ardour, he begged God's direction in his resolution and choice, that every thought of his mind, and every step he should make, might be over-ruled by his providence, that providence to whose conduct and disposal he had long before resigned up himself and all his concerns ; and whose motions he was fully determined, without the least reluctancy, to follow.

He had at all times different thoughts of the happiness of a married state from the generality of men, who are governed more by violent and disorderly passions, than by reason and religion. The following meditation is a sufficient proof of this, written by him in the 26th year of his age, and which he entitles *The Wish, or an Idea of Marriage*.

“ Marriage is the representative of the most sacred

union between Christ and his church ; Christ who left his blessed Father to become married to mankind, and espouse a whole church for a wife. Until this was instituted, man was but half made and imperfect ; ‘ For this shall a man leave his father and mother,’ saith God himself.

“ For this, first let me serve a sufficient time of courtship, but let it be sweetened with the conversation of the person I love ; and if there be opposition of others to struggle with, it will but render the conversation the more savoury, and afford matter for entertainment and discourse, and likewise many times for divertisement ; at least it will the more endear under a common suffering. Next, upon marriage, let us immediately remove from the mixt company in which hitherto we have lived, to enjoy each other in a more solitary retirement, where all things about us are our own, and to be our own care : and here, let us be sufficient company to each other, as Adam was to Eve in Paradise. Here let me in my family be the priest of the most high God, and let his praises be always in my mouth. And when God gives a child that can begin to talk, let it be both my wife’s concern and mine, with equal zeal, and equal naturalness, to make the works of God the constant matter of our discourse, and instruction to our child. As others talk to their child of a grandmother, an aunt, or the vanities of the world ; let us talk to ours of its Maker and our Father, God ; and of the place whither we hope to go, Heaven, and of the company we shall have there, the blessed angels. Let me, therefore, have a wife of a natural, free, ingenuous, and

noble piety, which shall not consist in phrases, and tone, and melancholy, and censure; but in vigorous zeal, uprightness, and integrity, and faithfulness of heart to God; a clear, cheerful, unaffected disposition, with a most ardent and bold love to God. So that we may not converse of God because it is our duty, but because our hearts are full of him, and we are used to it, so that we shall do it before we are aware. Then shall we sleep and awake with him, walk and sit in his presence, and live the life of angels upon earth. Nor shall it be in the power of the wicked one to inject peevishness, or quarrels, or displeasures, as being out of humour, the effects of folly and impiety, but we shall ever be one in the Lord. The Lord, if any, grant me such a companion."

He continued in a married state five years and five months; but the latter part of that time, it pleased God to allow him but little health; the last year especially, when his disorders returned more frequently, and with greater violence than before. Those bodily distempers shocked his resolutions of entering into holy orders, at least thus far, that if he should take that sacred character upon him, he would apply himself to the duties of it so far as he was able, but without undertaking a parochial cure: for thus I find him expressing himself some years before his death: "If my want of health should hinder me from taking a cure, which I very much apprehend, I could contentedly spend my time in the most profitable manner I was capable of, for the good of the church, particularly in devotional things, which seem to be my talent, and in which, without much more study,

I might hope to succeed." And such high thoughts had he, of the extent and difficulty of the pastoral duty, that he esteemed his frequent returns of sickness equivalent to a declaration of Providence, that he was not designed for the more laborious performances of it, though the bent of his desires was continually that way.

But even these desires were at last interrupted, by that fatal sickness which brought him to his end. For in April 1699, he was seized with a malignant fever, which about that time raged very much in Dublin; by it, his head was so much affected, that he had not a constant command of his thoughts, nor that undisturbed exercise of his faculties, which all men desire in those extremities. For some days of his sickness, his reason was clear, and to the last, he had frequent intervals of perfect understanding. And then it is impossible to conceive one in the greatest pain and anguish, more submissive, more patient, more resigned to the will of God: then prayers and praises were his only language, or calling upon others to pray for him. But no murmur, no complaint came out of his mouth. And though, no doubt, he had all the comforts of a good conscience, and powerful supports from God, in that great conflict of nature; yet he expressed himself with all that humility and awful concern which becomes a sinner, when he reflected upon that pure and holy God, at whose bar he was soon to be tried. "Now," says he, "must I stand or fall before my great Judge." And when it was answered, that no doubt he would stand firm before him, through the

His sickness
and death.

merits of our crucified Saviour : his reply shews upon what a firm foundation he built his dependance and hopes : “ It is in that,” says he, “ I trust; he knows it is in that I trust.” And his last moments of reason were spent in those heavenly exercises, wherein every good man would desire to breathe out his soul; and which, to him, no doubt, were the happy beginnings of endless praises above. He died the twenty-eighth day of April, 1699, in the forty-sixth year of his age; and his body lies interred in St. John’s church in Dublin. Of three children, (two sons and a daughter) wherewith God had blessed him, the daughter only survived him. And he left behind him a truly afflicted widow, who, I am persuaded, will persevere to shew the world, how justly she prized his excellent qualities and tender love; and who has spared no pains to get his life and character published, that so some justice may be done to his memory, and the world benefited by his example. And even that child which did survive him, has since followed her father, after having lived so long as to shew that she inherited his virtues, the sweetness of his temper, his devoutness and patience; so that had it pleased God to continue her in the world, she promised to have been a very shining example of piety and goodness. And indeed, both from what I saw in her myself, and from the informations of others, upon which I entirely depend, I have been strongly inclined to mention some of her particular sayings and actions, and to give instances of her piety and patience at four, five, and six years old. But they are so extraordinary that I choose to sup-

press them, because they would hardly obtain belief. I shall only observe from what I knew of that child, that parents do not begin time enough to form their children's minds to religion. Sin gets the first possession of their hearts, and they are taught lying and vanity much sooner than to love God, or pray to him. Whereas, if the same early care was used with the generality of children, as was taken with her, to give them such apprehensions of God, of sin, of truth, of heaven and hell, as they are capable of, though the success would not in many be equal to what it was in her, few having such natural dispositions to goodness as appeared in her, yet would it be such, as would go a great way in reforming the world, and making the next generation good and virtuous.

PART II.



HAVING thus gone through the most remarkable passages of Mr. Bonnell's life, and withal given the reader some general view of his piety and virtue ; I shall now enter upon that part of this work, for the sake of which the rest was put together, and without which the world is not much concerned to know his story, and that is, particularly to describe his character and excellences : to recommend him as a pattern worthy our imitation, in all the duties of the Christian life ; and to shew from him, how beautiful Christianity is, when reduced to practice ; when it becomes a rule of life and manners ; and not, as it is with most men, confined to the thoughts, and made an unactive notion of the mind.

His person,
temper, and
accomplish-
ments.

As to his person, he was tall, well-shaped, and fair. His aspect was comely, and shewed great sweetness, mixed with life and sprightliness. There was a venerable gravity in his look, a natural modesty, and sincere openness. But in the house of God his countenance had something in it that looked heavenly and seraphical ; an undissembled piety ; a devoutness that never can

be imitated nor acted, when it does not reside in the heart; and appeared always easy and unforced. His natural and acquired seriousness was tempered with a very engaging cheerfulness in conversation.

He was master of the accomplishing, as well as necessary parts of learning; had thoroughly digested the Greek and Roman authors, understood the French language perfectly well, and had made good progress in the Hebrew. In philosophy and oratory he exceeded most of his contemporaries in the University; and applied himself with good success to mathematics and music. In the course of his studies he read several of the Fathers; and among his private papers, I find some parts of the Greek Fathers, particularly Synesius, translated by him into English. He had a delicacy of thought and expression that is very rarely to be met with; so that there was a particular beauty and flame in any thing that he composed, especially upon pious subjects. He had a nice taste both in men and books, and was very conversant in our best English divines: but he particularly admired Hooker; whom he used to commend, as an author who writ with a primitive spirit, but modern judgment and correctness. All books of devotion he read with a very sensible pleasure, but was particularly fond of two authors, Kempis and Sales, and has left behind him a correct translation of "The Introduction to a Devout Life," written by the latter. But the Holy Scriptures were his constant and daily study; he read them, he thought them, nay, he prayed them over too; abundance of his meditations taking their rise from those passages of Scripture he

then read. Few understood, or practised better, the arts of gentle conversation; and none more industriously avoided all discourse that looked affected and vain, or any way seemed to aim at raising his own value. He seldom talked with any, but (without designing it) he gained upon them, and had a particular art of obliging. His abilities for business are very well known to all the officers of the revenue, and many others, who had the experience of them besides: and those who were obliged to attend him, were so treated by him, as if it had been his duty to wait on them: it being his great study to give every one ease and dispatch; and none knew what delays or difficulties meant where he was concerned, or had power to remove them.

But these are things of a lower nature, (though very excellent in themselves) when compared with his piety towards God, his justice and charity to man, his sobriety and temperance with respect to himself: I shall, therefore, in the prosecution of this work, consider Mr. Bonnell as a Christian; and give the justest account I can, from such materials as I have before me, of his discharging the several duties we owe to God, our neighbour, and ourselves.

The love of God, the first and greatest
 His love to God. duty of the law, was what he earnestly endeavoured to excite and confirm in his soul.

His papers are full of excellent meditations, to engage us to love God, with all our faculties and powers: and penitential complaints of his love falling so short, both of his duty and desires. And he took the true way to kindle this heavenly flame of

divine love in his heart, even by frequently contemplating those attributes of God which are aptest to command our love; his infinite goodness, and unlimited bounty; his paternal care, and watchful providence; but chiefly that stupendous instance of his love, the redemption of the world by the death and passion of his Son.

He had great and noble thoughts of Christianity, and never reflected on the wonderful compassion of God in sending his Son to die for us without the strongest emotions of love, and thankfulness, and wonder. The love of Christ was the subject of his daily thoughts; it filled his heart, and employed his pen. And his private meditations upon the astonishing love of our Redeemer, do shew of what spirit he was that composed them; a spirit truly affected with that infinite love, all over humility and gratitude, and overflowing with love, acknowledgements, and praise.

I shall here insert a few of these meditations, by which the reader may judge of the rest.

“Can my soul,” says he, in one place,
 “ever think enough, O my God, of the
 wonders of thy love; in all that thou hast
 done for thy creatures! that the Majesty of Heaven,
 and the whole incomprehensible Trinity, should be
 concerned and engaged for our redemption, when one
 word of thine, O my God, might have made infinitely
 more creatures than all the sons of men! By this
 the holy angels know, and wonder at the unaccount-
 able methods of thy proceeding: one while looking
 with adoration and amazement on thee, our common

*Meditations
 to excite our
 love to God.*

Creator and Lord ; and another while, on us men, to see whether we are not affected with the like adoration and wonder, who are so deeply concerned in it. ' Can ye, O mortals,' say they, ' be patient to let our God do all this for you, and take no notice of it ; as if it were your due, and not the wonder of heaven ! Did you know, O mortals, did you know what our God is, that does these things for you ; did you know him, as we know him, you would shrink back at the thoughts of it, and your souls would be overpowered with confusion. O too stupid men ! too highly favoured, and too little sensible of it ; were it not that some few souls among you have burning and reverend thoughts of this astonishing condescension, surely we should sue to the majesty of our God, to have leave to make you examples of vengeance, for your brutish ingratitude. But, O ye tender souls, who honour, who adore our God, and partake of the effects of his wonderful clemency and love ; since it has pleased him so to proceed, so to condescend, we envy you not this extraordinary effect of his grace, this miraculous mystery of his goodness and unsearchable wisdom, which we ourselves desire to look into and adore, not yet being able to comprehend it, till the consummation of all things ; but know withal that ye can never do it enough. O then awaken your souls, and think that time sadly lost, (to ingenious and grateful spirits) in which you have not a continued sense of this before you ; that God, when with one word he might have created beings more numerous and glorious than you shall ever be, yet hath chosen thus to deal with you, with such

wonderful condescension, and miraculous methods of love and mercy.'

"Yes, O my Father! O my God, I will continually contemplate and adore thy boundless love: and though we cannot fathom the reason of this thy choice, yet we cannot but see, that thou didst design hereby to make us creatures of love. For even in this dark vail, where our capacities are so narrow, and our conceptions so imperfect and weak; we cannot but see, that this wonderful method that thou hast taken, constrains us to love thee. For this thou hast desired to have us, (and desired it so earnestly, as not to think much, to pay thy precious blood to thy Father's justice for our ransom,) that thou mightest love us, and we might love and adore thee for ever. Where now is our soul, that we run not hastily to meet this thy love; and prostrate ourselves humbly before it! Shall the Son of God desire us for his love, and that at so dear a rate (to shew us the earnestness of his desiring it;) and shall we ourselves be so backward, to be at the pains to be made worthy of it! so heavy, as not to conceive more highly of it! so dull, as not to desire it more, and delight in the thoughts of it. Ah! most gracious Saviour, shed abroad thy love in our hearts; and if we cannot love thee as we ought, let us at least delight in the thoughts of thy love to us, and thy so earnestly desiring to have us for thy love. Amen."

The following meditation, composed at another time, will properly succeed the former, as breathing the same spirit.

"Ah Lord Jesu! though thy servants, who enjoy

thy love, rejoice in it, and praise thee for it; yet surely, even they who want it know how to prize it. Happy souls that breathe thy love, and live in the free air of it! Is it nothing for poor man to have leave to love the Son of God! nothing for a creature to have leave to love its Creator and Redeemer! That ever it should be permitted to such as we are, to love thee! and yet it is; so condescendingly gracious art thou. But ah! miserable state of infirm nature, that we should know what it is thus to love thee, and yet sometimes be without this love! ah that we might be contented to be without our food, our clothes, our health, and even the necessities of life, and all that is dear to us in this world, rather than be without thy love! but thy love consists not in fond expressions and endearments of words, but in a heart truly devoted to thy service, and to the love of thy will, and of thy servants. I believe it, Lord; yet why should not all that is tender in our souls, be sacred to thee also? Why hast thou given us such tender passions, if thou shouldest not be the prime object of them? O my God, since my soul will be acting, vouchsafe to be the centre of it. What comfort is it to me in life, to have a soul, to have passions, to have any thing that is good, or fit for an offering to thee; and yet any of them be diverted from thee! Lord, thou hast made me capable of loving thee; and I value neither my being, nor my faculties, nor any thing I have, but that I might attain to the happiness of loving thee. Thou art ever mindful of me, and continually interceding for me: I am ashamed to live without loving thee: I

beg that I may be faithful to thy service; but I beg also, that I may be grateful to thy goodness, and love thee with all my power. By all that is dear, by all that is tender, by all that is set out to us in thy whole Scripture, as the language of thy passionate soul; I implore that I may be permitted to love thee, better than at any time hitherto I have done; that I may live in thy love, and breathe it while I breathe in life. I am ashamed, O my God, to beg this privilege, yet ashamed to be without it. Let thy goodness prevent my desires, and fill my soul with what it humbly pants after."

The following meditation is upon the same subject.

"O Almighty Father, how couldest thou be willing that the Son of thy love, the Lord Jesus Christ, should in the flesh, which he took upon him of the blessed Virgin, bear part with us in those miseries which sin had brought upon us! he, who was so perfectly innocent, that the angels were not so free from sin as he! how couldest thou be willing to be estranged, as it were, from him so long! Did not thy bowels yearn (for thou allowest us to conceive of thee, as of a most tender parent) to think of those pains of body, that anguish of mind, those terrors of soul, which he should undergo for our sakes; how couldest thou not but check his too tender compassion, when he offered himself to do all this for us! how couldest thou not but say, O Son, thou art too fond of thy creatures! It is true, they are thy creatures, and made more peculiarly after thy image; yet they deserve not such pains, such condescension and sufferings from thee. On the contrary, O our most

gracious God, thou hast so loved us, as to give thy Son for us; so loved us, as to love him for his excess of love, and pity, and goodness towards us. All that is God conspired in this adorable mystery of love to man. When thou, O Father! couldst patiently see the innocent Jesus tormented for our sakes: when thou, O Lord of glory, in thy human nature, couldst bear a part with us in the saddest effects of sin, and all because thou didst love us, and to bring us to love thee; that thereby thou mightest raise us to the highest degree of glory, which infinite love could contrive, for those whom it intended to honour: when thou hast thus loved us, suffered and died for us; what shall we say, what shall we think of this thy love? what shall we think of ourselves, for whom all this is done? what of thy wrath, which we hereby avoid? O boundless ocean of overflowing love! let the sense of it ever fill our souls, that we may adore it according to its unmeasurable greatness. May all the humble praise that creatures can pay, be the constant tribute of our souls, to this thy love. May all that is our soul, and all that is our body, even to every atom, be full with zeal to praise thy goodness. And when we find ourselves too weak to express our full sense of thy love, may we call upon, and join with angels, and archangels, and all the company of heaven, to laud and magnify thy glorious name. Amen."

In another place is the ensuing meditation upon those words of the apostle. 1 Pet. i. 8. "Whom having not seen ye love."

"Blessed Lord, can I hear of any thing generously

or bravely done, by such whom thou hast endued with celestial or human virtues, and not be moved to love the person who acted them, especially if such a one be the deliverer of his country, and by whom, I myself, or others at this day, reap signal benefits! Who can read of David's act against Goliath, and not have their souls knit to him, as well as Jonathan who did see him? And if he were any where still alive, and might be seen, who would not be desirous to pay him honour, respect, and love?—Lord, thou livest, who hast done so great things for us; who can but love what thou hast done? who can but love the meekness and goodness wherewith thou hast done them? who can but love, honour, and esteem thee, who hast done them? when we behold thee in the agony of love and fear; fear deterring thee, and love engaging thee to suffer; when we behold thee speaking such words of love and tenderness as never man spoke to his dearest friend; are we marble, Lord, are we harder than flint? Do we change our nature, and become otherwise to thee than we are to all the world besides? O let us at least equal thee with thy creatures, and 'having not seen, let us love thee.' But let us love thee as becomes the nobleness of the object, and long, O gracious Jesu, to pay our homage to thy presence, whom absent we adore. Amen."

The comparison betwixt the love of Christ and his servants, with the love of David and Jonathan, he elsewhere pursues in the following manner.

"We cannot read the story of the loves of Jonathan and David, without being affected with it; and why? but because of the earthly grandeur there

is in it; a Goliath, defeated, a robe and belt, a royal table, the jealousy of a king; all which men are naturally apt to revere; these add grandeur, and grandeur affectingness to the story.

“Awaken thy mind, my soul open thy eyes: behold a greater love than both theirs is here; get up above the round level of this world; raise up thy head awhile, and see as angels see, and think as angels think: those things that are highly esteemed among men, are low in the sight of God. Here is the true grandeur, here is that which affects the minds of angels. The only Son of God on the one side, and the princes of his kingdom on the other. Here they seem mean and contemptible; but to those blessed spirits, who know the rank reserved for them in heaven, and the vacant thrones belonging to each of them, they appear with true greatness. The tokens of this love are jewels of immortal stamp, not an earthly robe, that fits loose on him that gives it, but the very body and blood of the giver. The acts of this love are, an effectual reconciliation of his friends to God the Father, though with the expence of his glory and life. And on both sides this act is mutual, of sacrificing all they had, and life itself, for each other. The expressions of this love are the most solidly endearing, the most substantially tender, without extravagance, fondness, or pomp: not with strained appellations, but in the natural terms of children and friends: ‘As the father hath loved me, so have I loved you; let not your heart be troubled: be of good cheer. My peace I leave with you. I will see you again.’ The circumstances of this love,

are his glorious resurrection, with the ministration of angels, opening the prison gates, and his triumphal ascension with the whole quire of angels attending ; promising at the same time to be mindful of his poor (but great) friends, whom he left here behind, in the midst of his and their enemies. Nor was he unmindful of them afterwards, like Pharaoh's butler : but when his martyr Stephen was overborne by the violence of his persecutors, he caused the heavens to open, to shew to this his beloved friend, that he beheld him in his conflict, and would immediately bring him to his own glory. Had he by angels taken him straight up to himself from the midst of their consistory, the scene would not have been greater to those heavenly spectators, than as he was pleased to manage it : for as we laugh at the rage which our enemies express against the dead bodies of our friends, so do the angels in heaven, at the rage of men against our living bodies here, being only a lump of clay and corruption, which must be sowed before it can be quickened, and put off mortality before it can be invested with glory.

“ O poor-sighted mortals ; that this scene does not appear to you with that grandeur as the loves of earthly princes, when to the blessed inhabitants of the other world it appears so heroic, and fills their thoughts with more affecting joy and wonder than all the earthly pomp could do ours : this noble scene of love, between our blessed Lord and his servants, from his first quitting his glory for their sakes, to the last act of love that shall appear on this earthly stage at the final consummation of all things.

How divinely great will these stories appear in the annals of eternity, to entertain that blessed society with, through never-ending days of bliss!"

I shall add but one meditation more upon his love to God; and that has a particular relation to God's laws and commandments; by which, with what goes before, the reader may judge of the sincerity and fervency of this his divine love, especially with respect to the adorable mystery of our redemption. Psal. cxix. 127. "I love thy commandments above gold and precious stones."

"The commandments of God are the rule of our life; the revelation of the holy will of God, the means of perfecting our nature, and making us ever happy. So passionately did David love them, that he had rather all the jewels of his crown should be lost, than one of them taken away. (Not one of them are to be spared, they are all adorable, all to be beloved.) Who would be content to lose one of his members, though not essential to his life? but the commandments of God are links of the chain of eternity, as much worth as heaven and immortality; who can but love that which is holy, just, and good? What true servant of God can but love every declaration of the will of his heavenly Father? Is it not condescension enough to captivate our hearts, that the Almighty should reveal his will to us? better heaven and earth should pass away, than one tittle of the law of God should be withdrawn. I love then every commandment of my God, even that which most contradicts my sinful and natural inclinations; and would not wish it to be taken out of the number,

for a thousand worlds. For I know the will of my God is holy, (his will is our sanctification) and I cannot be happy without being like him; nor can I be like him that is holy, if any part of this his law should be withdrawn. O Almighty God, give unto us the increase of thy grace; and that we may obtain that which thou dost promise, make us to love that which thou dost command, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Thus did Mr. Bonnell love God with all his heart and soul; and upon this ^{His humility.} foundation were all the other graces of Christianity strongly built: but none took earlier and deeper root in his soul than humility: that virtue, so peculiar to Christianity, so becoming a creature and a sinner. How soon this grace took possession of his heart, appears from the account already given of his early piety; particularly his care to conceal his keeping fasting-days at the University: and afterwards increased and improved with his life; it being his constant study and prayer, to be like him whom he so dearly loved; and be lowly in heart as our Redeemer was.

None could more industriously avoid all approaches to pride or vain glory; or whenever he was surprised into a secret complacency at esteem and praise, could be more humbled before God for it, and more bitterly bewail it. He always aggravated the fault in himself, represented it in its blackest dress, and was his own severest accuser. His private papers are full of arguments against pride, meditations upon the deformity of that sin, and devout prayers to be pro-

tected from its assaults. Some of these I shall insert here, both to shew us how truly humble he was, and to engage us to follow his example.

“ My yoke is easy, and my burthen light,” Matt. xi. 30.

*His meditations
upon humility.*

“ Didst thou, O blessed Lord, feel so many inconveniences, and endure such contradiction of sinners? didst thou come from heaven, to be a man of pain and sorrows? to be despised among thy friends, slandered and blasphemed by thy enemies, and not to have where to lay thy head? wert thou opposed in all thy endeavours to do good, and ill requited for many of thy mercies? couldest thou hear thyself called a friend of publicans and sinners, a glutton and wine-bibber, and a confederate with Beelzebub the prince of the devils? And yet couldst thou say, ‘ My yoke is easy and my burden is light.’ O what love was that to man, which made such great troubles and miseries seem light and easy! should it be said, how can this be? thou thyself givest us the reason; ‘ For I am meek and lowly in heart;’ and it is this, in the midst of all troubles, that procures ‘ rest to my soul.’ So then to be clothed with humility, is so far from being a burthen, that like our usual garments, it serves to defend us from the injuries of the air and weather; from piercing cold and scorching heat; from the cold of disdain and want, and the heat of injuries and persecutions.

“ Hear then, O my soul, the charming language of thy kind Saviour! put on the clothes that he wore, humility and meekness; in which he found so much ease, and which will bring so much rest to thee. And

grant, O my dear Saviour, that I may groan to be clothed upon with thy robes ; and out of love to thee, may think that work easy, which, by making me like thee, (in humility and meekness) will make all other things easy to me, and bring true and eternal rest to my soul. Amen."

To the same purpose does he argue with himself in another place, as follows :

" Lord, thou invitest me to come unto thee for ease ; but is it not by becoming lowly in heart, as thou wert ? but what means lowly in heart ? surely there is a lowliness that is not in heart ; an affected shew of humility before men, while pride may yet reign within. Outward fawning, affected complaisance, or submissiveness, is not that lowliness of heart which will give us ease ; while at the same time, we may grow impatient at an affront, and not be able to bear an outrage. If our heart boil within us at an injury, and be put into a tumult by a slight or disrespect, it is plain that we have not ease, and consequently, have not learned to be lowly in heart.

" We find three correspondent expressions used by our blessed Saviour : ' Poor in heart, pure in heart, and lowly in heart.' All which must refer to the inward sentiments and affections of our minds, in opposition to the usual acceptation of these words : poor, pure, and lowly, when applied to outward things : and that in which they all seem to agree, is desire. Thus he is poor in heart, who desires not riches, whether he hath them or not ; he is pure in heart, who desires not sensual pleasure, whether he is capable of it or not ; and he is lowly in heart, who desires not honour,

whether he hath it or not : and these desires all proceed from this principle, that we so value unseen things, the things of God, and heaven, and eternity, as not to desire wealth, nor be troubled at the disrespect of men ; and to dread that pleasure, which should make us unworthy of pleasure in the favour of God.

“That, therefore, which makes us lowly in heart, is conversing with another world ; for that renders us incapable of being proud of any thing that men can do to us. What cares a truly learned man, to be thought learned by peasants ? they will think the same of one who has no other learning but hard words ; nay, perhaps, will think such a one more learned than he that is truly so. What cares that happy soul, whose conversation is in heaven, for the judgment of the men of this world ? they value me, says he, for my outward figure, beauty, riches, wit, accomplishments, that is, for trifles ; these things do not make me valuable ; it is real goodness does that, in respect of that world which only is of value : and God only is judge of this, because it lies in the heart : men of this world are no more judges of it, than peasants are of learning. If they think well of me, it is but by accident ; a mere chance ; they guess at it, and may as well guess wrong as right ; and shall I think myself more valuable for their guessing ? if I am good, I am indeed more valuable for being so, not for their thinking me so. But if thou, my God, dost not think me so, woe be to me ; their judgment will do me little service.”

In another place, I find the following prayer :

“Lord, it is not enough that thou givest me leave

to think of thee; give me a heart also, to think humbly of myself: it is not enough that thou openest me a glade to look towards thee; O shut up the world on each side also from my eyes. For the remembrance of having thought on thee will not yield me pleasure, if I cannot think on thee, without being moved to consider what the world will think of me. If thou givest me leave to think on thee, O let me gain this by it,—to know myself to be nothing, and the world worse than nothing. And, O Lord! O gracious Goodness, heal my soul, and change the evil affections that are there; and then shall I neither think of the world, nor of myself, but of Thee, who art the only centre and happiness of my soul. Amen."

It is probable that some commendations which he met with for his piety, gave occasion to the following prayer:

"When, O when shall it be, gracious Lord, that I shall be content with thy judgment of me, without looking farther, or considering what others think of me? St. Anthony used to hear the devil often crying out, 'Make way for the servant of the Lord: behold the beloved of God:' or such like. In his solitude, the devil discovered himself more plainly to him than he does to us, whose thoughts are involved in the multiplicity of worldly matters: yet we may be sure the devil is in all such sounds, come they from the mouths of never so good persons; we may well have leave to say, 'Get thee behind me, Satan.' O make me watchful and careful of myself, that I be not circumvented by his deceits, and the fraud and treachery of my own sinful heart. Amen."

And how his prayers for humility were answered, and what a happy progress he made in that heavenly virtue, the following meditation will shew.

“To administer arsenic, is no injury to a man that has made poison his diet. A little disrespect is no injury to me, who love my own abjection; who can, God be blessed, bear a great many slights and affronts, nay, and delight in them too: but how or on what ground is it that a man can love his own abjection? it is because I believe these slights and affronts are sent on purpose by God, for the good of my soul: I take them as tokens of his love, and, therefore, I love them. Should he encrease my estate, or cause great presents and honours to be given me, I should not so heartily delight in them, because I should not so surely know, that they were sent out of love, and for the good of my soul. But all things that cause my abjection, I am sure, are so; having a natural tendency to this end, namely, the bettering my mind. I immediately find that they take my heart off from the world, that they abate my pride, (which is a tickling pain) and introduce a due esteem of myself, and that humility, in which consists the safety of my soul, and by consequence, the joy of my life.”

Thus did he conquer pride and vanity in himself; and no man seems to have been better acquainted with the remedies that are most proper for that outrageous distemper, which some of his advices will sufficiently make appear.

“If you are subject,” says he, “to spiritual pride, go to prayers to Churches where you are not known; and shift Churches, that you may not seem constant.

But if you have surmounted this weakness, keep to the same Church where you are known ; that your example may edify others, as well as the prayers edify yourself."

In another place he prescribes this cure for vanity.

" When your fit of passion lies in vanity, converse not with the things that make you think much of yourself; read rather than write, hear rather than speak : talk not of yourself, of your sickness, or your health, of your love or dislike, of your way of living or humour, or any thing that belongs to you."

To the same purpose is the following meditation :

" Watch and be sober," 1 Thess. v. 7. " Be sober, be vigilant," 1 Pet. v. 8. " Whatever makes our minds drunk, is opposite to this sobriety ; and every thing that makes us think unreasonably does thus intoxicate us, that is, makes us think otherwise than sober reason would dictate to us ; which is the true notion of drunkenness. Most sorts of pleasures do this, but particularly that which we take in the esteem of men. These unhappy words, I and Me, what a ferment do they raise in our blood ! how troublesome, yet pleasing ! how unquietly importunate ! how fond are we to talk and tell stories of ourselves ! and yet how sick does it make our souls ! if we hear ourselves well spoken of, it may perhaps pass over, and we may recover our minds. Yet there is danger that even this will return again to our thoughts, and perhaps when we are better employed. But surely I had almost as willingly meet the devil (under God's chain) as these thoughts ; that is, the devil in his ugly and frightful dress, as in this (for it is the devil still) tawdry, pleasing disguise. If then there be so much danger from

a few words transiently spoken, what shall we say when we put forth all our strength for hours together in company, to shew our parts, our reason, our learning, or whatever else we please ourselves, or may please others in. What is this but to bathe ourselves in poison, and let it soak into our blood, and fill all our veins! Lord, in the midst of what snares do we walk! on what precipices do we stand! it is a miracle of thy Almighty goodness, that makes it possible for creatures thus beset, to be ever able to get to heaven. Nothing less than thy mercy and power could save us out of them."

Agreeable to all these meditations, advices and prayers, was Mr. Bonnell's practice. A modest unaffected humility appeared in his words, his actions, and very countenance: "Not" as he himself, in one place, describes this virtue, "an affected humility, such as desires to be taken notice of; but such a true humility, as makes us first look upon ourselves as nothing; and then, not so much as once reflect whether others take notice of us or no; such a true humility, that diffuses itself through the whole body and soul; that influences and impregnates every motion, thought, and word; that shines in every gesture, and look, and all our deportment."

But this spirit of humility did, in a particular manner, direct and govern his devotions. He sometimes found, that using his voice in private prayer, was of great use to him, to quicken his zeal, and keep his thoughts attentive; and he always had his lodging so contrived, that he might use his voice without being heard; and in his sickness he never (before his

marriage) allowed any one to be constantly in the room with him; because the presence, even of a servant, restrained him from praying with his voice. And, after marriage, he was not pleased when any were present upon those occasions, but she alone, with whom he was free from these reserves. Such deep impressions had humility made in his soul, that no sickness, no pain, could in the least get the better of it.

His charity to the poor, though very great and extensive for his fortune, (as will be afterwards shewn) yet was always managed with the greatest secrecy and modesty imaginable; it being his great endeavour to conceal it as much as possible; of which we may be convinced by the following meditation, wherein he enquires, why, by doing our alms openly, we have no reward?

“ The end of alms, is not solely to relieve the poor; for what was the widow’s mite (which yet was a great charity) to this purpose? God needs not our alms for this end, no more than he did the sacrifices of old, to enrich himself. ‘ All the beasts of the forest are mine,’ saith God. In like manner, with one act of his will, he could enrich (if he thought fit) all the poor in the world. But he requires our alms, as he did the sacrifices of old, only as testimonies, or fruits of the inward graces of our minds. A sacrifice without contrition, is a vain oblation; but the sacrifices of God are a broken heart. Again, the poor are as truly relieved by alms without charity, as with it; which shews, that the relief of the poor is not primarily intended by God, but a sincere desire of pleasing him.

'Tis then the inward graces of the mind that are rewarded by God ; such as true humility, contempt of the world, reliance on God's providence, and sincere desire to please him ; which graces cannot be in the mind of one that affects to do his alms openly. For what humility is there in one that is greedy of vain glory ? what reliance on God's providence, in one that thinks to purchase favours from the world, by shews of goodness ? what contempt of the world, in one that traffics with it, and hopes for rewards from it ? what sincere desire to please God, in one that above all things seeks to please men ? so then, here being no graces to be rewarded, no reward is to be expected. In some, outward acts have the outward rewards ; which, by the established laws of God in nature, arise from them, as trees spring from seeds ; but the inward and spiritual acts of the mind, have spiritual and eternal rewards assigned them by God.

“ Vain glory is opposite, not only to one grace, but eats out the life of all graces in our souls. We have great reason, therefore, to watch against this vice with all our care, especially in religious matters : ‘ For if the light that is in us be darkness, how great is that darkness ?’ If the good we do be principally designed to please men, how void are we of all goodness ?”

He used to wish there were some Church in Dublin, wherein the Holy Sacrament were administered every Lord's day ; “ for going about from Church to Church,” he said, “ had something of ostentation in it ;” and it was with difficulty that he at last conquered this scruple. And when he went to Churches, to which he was not accustomed, he generally chose the most

private place, where he might be least observed, and least disturbed ; and when he was so happily placed, he always continued upon his knees, at his private devotions, till the public service began. But if he was forced to be satisfied with a more public seat, and there were company about him, he shortened his private prayers, that he might not be taken notice of ; for he avoided being singular and remarkable in all his actions, much more in those of religion ; in them he aimed at something greater than fame, more lasting and substantial than the vain applause of men ; even those praises which are endless, and that honour which never can decay.

But his opinion of the secrecy of religious actions, and his practice too, the reader will best learn from himself, in the two following meditations ; which are still farther instances of his humility, and his great watchfulness against whatever had the least tendency to vanity.

“ My right hand,” says he, “ is the grace of God : my left, my spiritual friend. In acts of devotion, fasting and charity, I am to be exceeding nice, how I let one of these know what the other enables me to do. To sound a trumpet, and tell all the world what you do, is certainly a mark of a dissolute and unspiritual mind, not ambitious of heavenly rewards, nor sensible of spiritual pleasures. To reveal these only to a spiritual friend, may perhaps in some cases be necessary ; but if you would be perfect, subject them only to the eyes of God ; he will be your sufficient counsellor. For the advantages you may reap by revealing them to men, in any prudent instructions or

encouragements, will not countervail the hazard you undergo of self-complacency, in the opinion another may have in your being devout, mortified, or charitable, and of losing your comfort; the greatest encouragement you have to persist in those charming duties, which wholly lose their sweetness, when you, in any measure, sink into flesh and blood; your comfort, I say, which wholly consists in acquitting yourself in secret, to your heavenly Father, and approving yourself to him."

The other meditation is as follows :

"We lose," says he, "something of spiritual strength, (as Samson did,) by discovering secret transactions between God and our souls; for this gives our conscience a damp, since it tends to magnify ourselves, and looks like boasting of secret favours, which is a means of lessening favours among men. If what I speak of this sort tends to magnify myself, as being a favourite of God, I cannot be too jealous of myself because our hearts are deceitful, and very treacherous; and something of secret pride will be apt to steal in upon us, in such relations. If I tell of raptures and elevations vouchsafed to me in prayer; of ardent desires after the holy communion, and longings for heaven, and the like; I must be well made indeed, and strongly armed with the grace of God within me, if I do all this only for the edification of my neighbour, and to provoke him to praise God on my behalf, without any by-design to recommend myself to his esteem."

It is now time to consider Mr. Bonnell, with respect to other virtues besides humility: I shall, there-

fore, conclude this part of his character with the following prayer :

“ While I walk the streets, let not my head seem full of business ; but what I delight in, and desire always : let head and heart be full of my Saviour. Take from me, O my God, a haughty gait, a proud look, and supercilious forehead. I consider how my Redeemer walked the streets of Jerusalem, how modestly and plainly he was apparelled, how little he coveted to make a figure, how little to see, or be seen, how meek and humble his behaviour was, how far from striving or quarrelling, or lifting up his voice in the streets. Let my deportment, O my God, be such as if I walked with thee then, for thou dost vouchsafe to walk with me now.”

One so humble as Mr. Bonnell was, could hardly fail to be meek and patient ; and such he was in a very high degree. Those who conversed with him saw a spirit of meekness and gentleness in his words, and actions, and behaviour : and it could hardly be otherwise, but that he who was so lowly in his own eyes, must receive injuries from men, with great meekness ; and corrections from God, with submission and patience. For he very justly esteemed pride the parent of most of our disorders, particularly of anger, impatience, and revenge. To this purpose he expresses himself in the following meditation.

“ I have a notion, that the sting of all affliction is pride ; it is this gives a pungency to every grievance, and makes it pierce our heart. Others bruise, but do not wound us ; they sit heavy on us without, but do

not gnaw and fret us within. I am not, perhaps, afraid of losing my estate; but I am afraid of losing my value and reputation in the world. I am not afraid of a low condition, but I am afraid of contempt. I am not afraid of sickness and death, but I am afraid of scornful pity; I am not afraid of a plague, of war, or a famine; but I am afraid of an insulting enemy; and the tyranny of one that hates me. Upon this reason also it is true what David says; 'It is better to fall into the hands of God, than of men.' For we have no dispute whether we should humble ourselves before God or no; but the difficulty of doing this to men, creates us all our uneasiness. If persons are impoverished, or sick, or suffer from heaven, they seem to have no religion, if they are not capable of consolation; but if they groan under the yoke of an imperious man, and are chained to him as his slaves, they must have the highest top and perfection of religion to admit of comfort; since the last vice which religion has to dispossess and conquer is pride. Job felt all the blows of heaven with an unwounded soul; and the reason is, because the strokes of heaven drive us to humble ourselves before God, dethrone pride, and calm the soul. But the perpetual gratings of an ill-natured, insulting man, whom you must every day see, and yet with dread and boiling of heart; this stirs up our natural choler, foment and awakens pride, and renders our misery insupportable. It is the boiling of the cholic humours in our body, with which our soul is so tenderly touched, and so nearly sympathizes; that is the sting of all affliction, and this is pride. This is the fatal ferment, that no considera-

tion can allay. O Lord, my God, grant that I may purge out this old leaven, even the leaven of pride and malice ; and then whatsoever afflictions, diseases, troubles, befall me, I shall find peace : peace with myself, peace with men, and peace with thee ; for the yoke of my humble and meek Saviour, does indeed bring rest and peace to the soul. Amen."

In another place, he gives the following reason, why most people resent injuries at the rate they do.

"We stomach," says he, "injuries that we think are done to us ; we fling and throw under them : but it is not the injustice done us, that we so much resent ; as that the pride of our hearts makes us think ourselves so considerable, that nobody ought to disturb our repose. Alas ! if we lay it aside, we shall see reason enough, why the just providence of God should give constant disturbance to our repose ; and that we should not stomach, nor be angry at it ; but meekly, composedly, and thankfully accept it."

The same reason he assigns why so many are continually finding fault with the public management of affairs, as why they resent and stomach injuries done to themselves. To this purpose I find the following remark among his writings. "Necessity seldom makes men mutiny so much as pride. Because they are not honoured by being admitted to the councils of others, therefore they dislike their measures, and endeavour to draw others after them. The meek and humble man is rarely a mutineer, he chooses rather to suffer with others, than be clamorous by himself."

And how constantly he endeavoured after a meek

and mortified spirit, will still farther appear from the following meditation.

“ How happy is it to practise mortification of mind and will ; but of all such mortifications, those of our own choosing, are nothing comparable to our meekly accepting those which God sends. For still the less of our own will in any thing, the better. Now what a mortification is it, to find ourselves slighted and disesteemed, for those very actions, behaviours, and speeches, which we thought fine, and valued ourselves upon ? what a mortification is it to have some of our defects, infirmities, and weaknesses, discovered and made known to the world ? what a mortification is it to be guilty of indiscretions and inadvertencies, which expose us to men ? and shall we love and delight in these ? I am sure we have great reason ; for respect and esteem do but puff us up with an uneasy tympany, and fill us with bloated and undue fancies of ourselves ; so that when we meet with any disrespect or affront, our breasts boil, and we are tortured with resentment, for want of having meek and sober thoughts of ourselves. In both these cases we make idols of ourselves, and our thoughts run incessantly on ourselves ; in the first case, with pleasure ; in the last, with disquiet. Ought not a pious soul to desire and pray earnestly to be freed from these assaults, and to love any thing that comes to it with a seasonable relief ? St. Basil prayed to be freed from the head-ache, and then lust came ; and then he prayed for the return of his head-ache again. Surely we ought to love those mortifications which keep us free from the assaults of pride and anger, as well as any

other temptation: assaults, which are continually dogging us, and upon every occasion starting up to molest us. We ought to love them, not only as they keep us sober-minded, and make us think duly and meekly of ourselves; but as they are more certain marks of God's favour, than those things that exalt us in the world, and procure us respect and esteem: for these things may do our minds a great deal of hurt, but the others do them certainly good. Let us then accept of such mortifications, embrace and love them, upon account both of God and our own souls. And may our gracious God fill all his faithful servants with true meekness; and such habitual humility, as may make us love disrespects from the world, when He sends them; and in all things render us like to our great Master."

As few men had greater trials of patience, from frequent and violent returns of sickness; ^{His patience.} so none could bear it with a more composed spirit, and a more cheerful submission to the will of God. His papers are full of pious meditations upon the advantages of sufferings; God's end, in afflicting us with pain; and the use we ought to make of it. Thus in one place he argues with himself:

"Should a man, lying under an indisposition of body, say to his physician, who was also his friend; O my friend, how sweet soever your love has been to me heretofore, I cannot now please myself in it; it gives me no savour or relish, as it used to do. I hope you will excuse me, for I have the same respect for you, but not the same love. Would not the other reply; alas! I know you cannot. I have given you

that which for the present indisposes you, and makes you unable to do it : but it was, because your health, or your life, was in danger. I have indisposed you to love me by this medicine, that I might not be entirely deprived of your love by your death. Have patience, and this will be over, and you will love me again better than ever.

“ O my soul ! this is no feigned case, but the real truth. Thy true Physician, who loves thee, and whom thou wouldest love, hath indisposed thee, by the physic which he hath given thee ; that he might not lose thee for ever : this will soon be over, and thou shalt love him again ; either here, or hereafter ; for he knows that this is thy desire, as well as it is his : even his, who loved us so, that he despised glory and shame, life and death ; that he might fill heaven with lovers, and make us love him as he hath loved us.”

The following meditation, composed at another time, will shew what divine thoughts sickness excited in his mind ; and how he improved it to the noblest purposes ; even from thence to contemplate the bitter pains, which our Redeemer suffered.

“ Never so well do we contemplate what our Saviour suffered for us, as when we ourselves are in pain ; what his tender and delicate body felt, when it hung not only in unintermitting, but still encreasing torments, so many hours on the cross, as when our bodies are racked with some grievous distemper. Who can then but say to him, with the penitent thief ; I indeed am justly in pain, for ‘ I receive the reward of my deeds ; but this man hath done nothing amiss.’ Nothing indeed amiss hast thou done, O my adorable

Redeemer, therefore it is more for thee to feel pain one moment, (to choose to feel that for our sakes, which did not belong to thee, and to which thou wert no ways subject) than for all the men of the world to be in torments a million (perhaps an eternity) of years. For since eternity of torments is the natural consequence of sin; it is more for the Son of God to feel pain one moment, (against nature) than for men to be naturally in pain for ever. Pain is the consequent of sin; as shadows flow from dark bodies: but thou couldest feel no pain, but by thy own choice: therefore I conceive each moment of thy pain, with the same horror, as I do an eternity of torment for sinful men: and such we are all without the fruit of thy pain. Thou didst indeed bear our infirmities, and wert bruised for our sins. Thou didst vouchsafe to drink of our cup, and partake of our natural miseries; that by thy stripes we might be healed; and saved from our natural torments, by thy voluntary pains. No longer is pain a curse; thou by feeling it, hast made it blessed: no longer is hanging on a tree a curse; thou hast made it to penitents, a step to glory. Sanctify, O gracious Lord, I beseech thee, my pain which I now suffer; for by thy feeling pain, thou hast sanctified it to all thy faithful servants: let it make me fearful of that wrath which devours to the nethermost hell; and of those pains which shall never end. Let it make me zealous for the good of souls; and labour to snatch them from everlasting burnings. But above all, let the sense of what thou didst feel, make me undervalue my own sufferings, to whom pain and misery is naturally due; and not only let

me patiently bear them, but rejoice that in this, at least, I am made like unto thee. Amen."

What here follows was written in a severe fit of sickness, in the midst of our troubles, 1689.

"I sit here a patient of my God's, while he gives me physic for my soul. It works heavily with me, and makes me very sick; but I am sure will have a good effect, while I bear it meekly and submissively, and humble myself under his hand, for my offences; and this will please him as well as if I were now exercised in most devout and sublime contemplations. For my God will give me this too another time, for my patient bearing my present inability to attain to them. Amen."

"O my God, how gracious art thou to me in freeing me, by the rod upon me, from sinful affections; now in this perilous time, that nothing may interpose between thee and my soul; when nothing can give me comfort or peace, but only leave humbly to draw nigh to thee: let me not think it hard to suffer while thou strikest, for thy chastisements are fatherly, and full of ends of love and mercy. Amen."

Again, when after some short enjoyment of health, he saw sickness making its approaches; though the prospect of it damped him a little, yet he soon recovered himself, and expressed nature's fears, and his own desires, in the following meditation.

"I cannot avoid some dejection of mind, at the apprehensions of the return of my distemper, after some respite from it. The thoughts of a meagre, sickly look; of a melancholy confinement to my chamber; of drugs and physio, and casting about for

new remedies, and being shut up from business, and the duties of my place, strike me with a little terror. But I thank God, it is only in my body; and those qualities of vanity and worldliness, which I have contracted in this spurt of health, while it hath been new to me, (my thoughts being apt to be strongly carried away by a new thing) that these fears affect me. These qualities I esteem my burden, and strive against them; and would gladly have them mortified, though they have a reluctance to that which would oppose them, as the return of my illness would. And, therefore, as it is from them that I feel my shock, in the apprehension of illness; so it is they that draw back, when I would put myself into the hands of God, and resign myself to his will. But with my mind, I entirely submit to his pleasure: the apprehensions of being in his hand, give me a perfect readiness to what he shall ordain. I see sickness at hand, and I am troubled: I look a little further, and see that it is thou, Lord, that orderest it so; and I have sudden peace, and a great calm. 'The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib,' and the hand that feeds him. Oh! that I may have the promptitude of these creatures, and know thee my owner; and own the hand that disposes of me! how happy shall I then be! O say to my soul, when I am terrified and in pain, as thou didst to thy disciples; 'It is I, be not afraid' and my soul shall be at ease."

But at another time, afterwards, he was so far from being disturbed at the prospect of sickness, that he made it a matter of joy and thankfulness, as the meditation that here follows will shew.

“ I bless thee, O my God, that I can rejoice in the thoughts of this approaching pain and sickness, which thou art preparing to bring upon me, as what, I hope, will be an effectual means to cure me of all sinful affections, and of loving any thing beside thee. How easy will the greatest torments of pain be, when I can see thee directing them to this end, which I have so long strove and laboured after.

“ Lord, thou wilt help me to perform the difficult task which thou hast given me: and though thy helping me give me pain, yet that pain to my body shall be ease and pleasure to my mind; for by it, I trust that I may come to love thy glory above all things; and to love all things only in thee; that my heart and my soul may be filled with thee; and my mouth may speak continually thy praise.

“ This coarse upper garment, in which thou hast clad me, O my God, (by making my continued indisposition to require it) is the ballast of my soul: I will love it, and bless thee for it: it keeps me from vanities, from affecting courtship, and setting up for a figure in the world. I will, therefore, wrap up myself in it, and not desire to be free from a necessity of using it; but wear it joyfully as thy livery, and as a badge of my being thy care. Amen.”

Again he praises God for that which few in this world do think a blessing, but to too many is one of the most afflicting effects of sickness.

“ I praise thee, O my Saviour,” says he, “ for these pale looks, this wan visage, and for giving me such a face as is not capable to rival thee, nor rob thee of any heart of thy servants, which I fear the naughti-

ness of my own heart, if thou didst give me other looks, would be apt to abuse to this end : I dare not be secure of myself ; I willingly accuse myself to thee, my Lord, and rejoice and bless thee in that thou dost put it out of my power to be treacherous to thee."

In the same place he pursues his devotions in the following manner.

" I praise thee, O my God, for making me thy care, and for this proof of it, that thou art pleased to chastise me with thy fatherly rod. Two things I humbly beg of thee, that thou wouldest pardon those things which provoke thee to deal with me thus contrary to thy gracious nature, and that thou wouldest sanctify thy rod to me, that it may be effectual to remove my sins, that thou mayest remove it without danger of my soul's returning to folly. Amen."

These are some of Mr. Bonnell's meditations and prayers of sickness and pain ; nor did his practice at all fall short of them ; for that patience which he so earnestly prayed for, he enjoyed in a measure beyond the greatest part, even of good men. When he has been in the greatest anguish, with two very tormenting distempers, (the gravel and cholic) he would often say ; " Thy will, O God, thy will be done with me, and upon me : I have no will of my own, and rejoice in doing thy will. O what mercies are these sufferings, if they be the way God thinks fit to punish my sins here, in order to spare me hereafter ! How much greater were my Saviour's sufferings upon the cross ! Did he undergo such agonies for my sins, and shall not I cheerfully submit to, and embrace whatever God sees fit to lay upon me !" with much more

to the same purpose in every fit of pain. When any medicine was given him, he would, after begging God's blessing, take it; and then would usually say; "it is better than I deserve! I bless God for it, and for giving me such assistances in this extremity. Oh! how many of his better servants want these comforts! blessed be his holy name for giving them to me."

Nor was he only patient under bodily pains, but submissive to the will, and satisfied with the wisdom of God in every affair of life, under every disappointment, difficulty, and trouble. He considered that God gives us different talents, different capacities and employments, and will not proportion our reward to the part he gave us to act, but our faithfulness in it. To this purpose is the following meditation upon 1 Sam. xxx. 24. "And it was so from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day, that as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff; they shall part alike."

"O blessed Son of David, and captain of our salvation, under whose banner thy servants fight, and are thy sworn soldiers to their lives' end; when I hear some say, thy 'yoke is easy, and thy burden light,' and they seem to speak as they think, because they find not much difficulties in life, but run on in a happy and even composure of health, and of business proportioned to their strength, freed by their circumstances from violent temptations, and by thy favour in framing them from strong passions, (though I own, and exultingly declare with them, that thy

yoke indeed is an easy yoke, and thy service perfect freedom, and that the keeping thy commandments is its own infinitely abundant reward ; yet) I consider that in warfare all have not the same posts of hardship and danger. Some confront the enemies, and some must ' stay by the stuff.' What earthly commander knows how to suit these parts exactly to his men? But thou, O Lord, dost it with the highest degree of wisdom, and fitness to thy several soldiers' strength and abilities. And because thou givest each his burden, according to his might in nicest equity, therefore thou hast ordained it for a perpetual law to them, that those that ' tarry by the stuff,' shall part alike with those that confront the enemy. Both share alike in thy favour, both enjoy alike thy love, and both partake alike in thy glory ; only here is the difference ; not who have had the hardest posts, but who have behaved themselves faithfully in the posts they had, whether hard or easy, shall be rewarded by thee."

Such was Mr. Bonnell's humility, such His self-denial. was his meekness and patience ; and agreeable to these was his mortification and self-denial ; a grace, which always proceeds from a meek and lowly spirit. I shall not here speak of his mortification in point of fasting, and the great severity of his life ; that must be reserved for another place. The mortification here meant, and what Mr. Bonnell constantly laboured after, was an unconcerned indifference to the world ; to its profits and pleasures ; to honour and fame ; and all the other idols of mankind. His great endeavour was, to gain the entire mastery

of his will and affections ; and so to discipline and tame them, that they might not grow stubborn and rebellious. In order to this, his usual practice was to deny himself in small matters, to which he found his inclinations prompted him, that so they might be under his government in greater. This point he had nicely considered ; and treats of it in several places of his writings, with his usual piety and judgment ; as will appear from one or two meditations upon this subject.

“ That denying ourselves in particular and little instances of lawful enjoyments, is not,” says he, “ a superstitious and unprofitable exercise, appears from hence, that God, ‘ who is a bountiful rewarder of a cup of cold water,’ gives us good thoughts for it : which flow into our minds, with a sensibly more freedom and affectingness, upon such occasions, than at other times. On the contrary, our not complying with such a hint, when we have a motion to deny ourselves in small things ; but yielding to our appetite, or curiosity, and perhaps palliating our doing so, with saying, that ‘ it is a trifle, not fit to make a sacrifice of to God,’ deprives us of good thoughts, and hardens our minds against them ; unless we recover ourselves, by being humbled before God, and fortifying our resolution against the next encounter. For though this yielding to our appetite be not a sin ; yet it has such a resemblance and image of sin, that no lover of God, but ought to have an aversion to it. What is sin, but giving way to our appetites and inclinations, against the checks of our conscience ? the headstrong violence of our wills carrying away for-

cibly our powers and faculties, to act against our reason and understanding. And this agrees so far with sin, that it is an instance, though in a lesser degree, of the headstrong unruliness of our will, carrying us on to act, though not against our consciences, because the matter of it is lawful; yet against the counsel of our reason, exhorting us to exercise ourselves in little self-denials; that we may have the better, and more habitual mastery over our appetites; and be able to watch and resist more easily the first motions of sin, in which the whole strength of a Christian lies: for who is master of himself, without a miracle, if these are once consented to? wherefore the holy Psalmist cries out, after he had prayed God to cleanse him from secret sins of infirmity and surprise; ‘Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins;’ from sins that flow from an ungovernable will, against the preceding checks of his conscience, though in never so little instances: for should he at all give way to these, his appetites would gain such mastery, and his will be so chained to them, (for will and appetite are very near akin, we hardly know the line that bounds and distinguisheth their natures; only that will is a kind of spiritual appetite, and appetite a sort of corporeal will) that he could not hope to be ‘long innocent and free from the great offence;’ that finishing sin, which bringeth forth death.”

The meditation that here follows, is upon the same argument, “the benefit of Self-denial” in things of lesser moment, and that are indifferent in their own nature.

“‘My soul,’ you will be apt to say, ‘this is an in-

nocent desire ; why should I put myself to the trouble of thwarting it? Were it unlawful, I hope I should refuse it, how much self-denial soever it required. God does not require us to make our life uneasy, nor to render his service irksome and unpleasant to us. He permits us to indulge ourselves a modest freedom in innocent things : and it is superstition to think he is pleased with the sacrifice of trifles.' But fancy that thou hearest thy God thus speaking to thee : ' My child, I know that this is a great snare ; for it is not the matter thou refuseth, that is weighed by me ; but the act of refusing : I refuse not the day of small things ; do not thou despise them. But thou art farther advanced, as thou thinkest ; and wouldest fain leave this lesson to beginners.' But he that advances, without laying a good foundation, will be again to begin. He that begins in the middle of a book of mathematics, because the beginning is full of plain and evident axioms and propositions, that seem to be so easy as to be of no use, will soon find the want of these first principles ; and be glad, with shame, to look back on what he despised before. So likewise thou, when thou findest thyself incapable to conflict with thy passions, and to command thy thoughts and inclinations, wilt then too late consider thy neglect, in not having trained thy mind by degrees to self-denial. If thou gainest not the victory over thyself in small things, how wilt thou be able to do it in greater? Set apart then to thyself some time ; and say in this time, I will deny myself in every thing I have a mind to ; yet do it calmly, without superstition, without anxiety. This thou wilt think, perhaps,

at first, a strange task : thy inferior part will repine, and make many complaints, and thy body be sick, at such sudden checks and contradictions. But mind none of these, my son ; smile at thy foolish sensitive part, for it does not understand that this is even for its eternal benefit. In a little time, this very denial will grow a pleasure, because it will have little of reluctance in it ; and the pleasure of triumphing over thy own inclinations, will make the remaining trouble insensible. Then thou mayest advance to consider, what things of moment thou hast a mind to ; and there apply thy discipline, and teach thy mind to obey ; and in general, take this for a certain rule, ‘ To suspect thyself in whatever thou hast a strong inclination to.’

“ Here’s the great point of self-denial, to deny our thoughts, and turn them from objects to which they incline, to others. Our actions have something gross and perceptible in them ; but our thoughts are refined ; not to be observed but by nice application. This is the true source ; get the mastery of these, and you command all the rest. It is in vain to think to deny ourselves in actions, if we cannot do it in thoughts ; nor to command our passions, if we cannot govern our thoughts. Passion lives in the thoughts, and the effect of it is, to engage and determine our thoughts ; but, if we have an habitual command of these, and use ourselves to deny them, to turn and wind them as we please ; we shall easily govern our passions too, and avoid any actions we are prompted to by them. Why should it then seem hard to thee, O my soul, or a matter worthy to be once named ; to

deny thyself in trivial and indifferent concerns, that thou mayest gain the mastery of thy will in greater? If thou standest in the presence of a prince, thou hast lost all thy will in these things. If thou hast a mind to see any thing particularly in the room; yet the will dies as soon as born; so much does a prince's presence awe thee. Is not thy chamber, O my soul, the presence-chamber of Almighty God? (O that thou wert more sensible, and more worthy of such an honour!) and yet here can thy will live, so much as to give thee the least shock, when thou deniest thyself an indifferent thing thou hast a mind to, that thou mayest, with the greater ease and cheerfulness, give up thyself to the will of God.

"Herein appears the admirable wisdom of God. God saw that the contempt of outward things, of the pleasures of sense, of riches, and glory, and the like, (which are the baits the devil lays for us, and whereby he drowns many souls in perdition,) was necessary for man, in order to his being restored to bliss; what course, therefore, did the Divine Wisdom take to embitter these things to man; and make their contraries, that is, chastity, poverty, humility, patience, and the contempt of the world, pleasing and easy? God himself came down from heaven, and taking upon him the form of a servant, did by his own example make this medicine, (so necessary to sick men, but withal so bitter and loathsome,) become so pleasing and delightful, that good men now love fasting, more than worldly men do excess; poverty, more than riches; and mortification, more than sensual pleasures."

But as Mr. Bonnell had noble and exalted thoughts

of God, and a flaming love to his Maker and Redeemer; as he was meek and lowly, mortified and patient; so these divine graces led him to all necessary acts of devotion. I shall, therefore, now consider, how he discharged the duty of prayer, both public and private: how constant and devout a guest he was at the Lord's table: how religiously he observed the Lord's-day, and the feasts and fasts of the church.

As to the duty of prayer, it was his constant and daily work, and most delightful entertainment; and he discharged every part of it in so exact and regular a way, that his private devotions were not omitted for the sake of the prayers of the church; nor did any constancy at the former, make him neglect being daily at these. His practice from his youth, was to begin the day with God, and consecrate to him his earliest thoughts, and in this he persevered all his life long: for the first thing he did in the morning, was repeating psalms proper for it, as the sixty-third, the latter part of the seventy-third, and others: and all his dressing and washing-time he repeated the 103d, 116th, and 145th psalms. In this part of his devotions it was his desire that his wife should bear her part: and when they were over, he at large offered up his own private prayers in his closet. The evening he consecrated to God, as well as the morning. His first exercise (as soon as he could get free from company) was repeating the Magnificat, and some other hymns of praise; his wife in these still joining with him. Then he usually retired into his closet, and with great exactness examined the state of his soul;

How he
discharged
the duty of
prayer.

and by reading and meditation, put himself into a right temper for prayer; which was then performed in the fullest and devoutest manner. And he concluded the day in the same manner that he began it; repeating the fourth, and other psalms, while he undressed. And when ready to step into bed, he kneeled down and offered up a short prayer, and then lay down in peace. This was his practice so constantly, that neither the coldness of the weather, nor any bodily indisposition of weariness, made him neglect it.

But it is from himself the reader must have the clearest view of the regular constancy of his private devotions: for writing to a religious friend, with whom he was very intimate, upon the subject of private prayer, and the most advantageous way of discharging that duty, he thus delivers himself:

May, 1692.

“The first and the last of the day, is to me essentially necessary; and no other time of the day could supply the want of these. But I will not say so of others; since the condition of some is such, that they must take other times, or can get none at all: use and custom may make other times of the day as useful to them. But when I have done with the world, and before I begin with it, is the time when my mind is fittest for religious exercises; and perhaps you will find my rule necessary for yourself; not to let even the prayers of the church draw you out, unless you have had time first to discharge your private duties at large at home. I go out with pleasure and confidence, when I have done this; and public prayers are then more pleasing to me. At

nights I must get a little more time, to sit still, or read and write in, as well as pray. But sometimes it pleases God to call us to a larger attendance on himself, when he makes the world vile in our eyes; gives us clearer views of our future hopes, convinces us of the end for which we came into the world, and of the only thing necessary. Happy are we indeed, when he calls us to this, and gives us leisure for it. We may be sure it is to invigorate and fortify us for some farther work, which he has for us to do; or to bring us to consecrate ourselves, and all our powers, more entirely to his service. It is good to give way to this call, and to steal what time for it we can; and not slightly or easily to suffer ourselves to be diverted from it; that we may give way to the grace of God, to have its perfect work on our hearts. But this is not to be looked upon as a course to be taken up by us; or any vows or resolutions to be made to keep to it, longer than for the present heat; because it is not consistent with our civil duties in human life. The disciples were not long permitted to stay on Mount Tabor, but they must go down again to the multitude that waited for them.

“ Let us then go bravely on in the way of piety, into which our good God has called us; and remember that we must go up hill, and down hill; sometimes see our journey’s end, and sometimes lose sight of it: but while he permits us to see in our hearts, a desire to do nothing in this world, but please Him; and not to live, but that we might live to Him: let us comfort ourselves in his goodness, and not be disturbed at every disorder; and may his infinite

mercy grant us to grow up in his fear and love, to his heavenly kingdom."

Here, from his advice to one of his friends, we may learn his own practice; and from the information of those, who had the best opportunities of knowing the secrets of his heart, I can affirm, that the fervency and humility of his devotions were answerable to their constancy. His posture was the most lowly he could contrive; he not only kneeled, but frequently lay prostrate upon the floor, and had such strong emotions in his soul, as often expressed themselves in a flood of tears: and as to his posture, he not only chose that which was most expressive of humility and reverence; but that which came nearest to our Saviour's example in his prayer before his passion; or as he does in one place very well express it: "I put myself into that posture, O my most gracious Saviour, in which thou didst endure thy dreadful agony, of which I cannot think without horror, because thou wert the Son of God who sufferedst it; and because it was my sins that occasioned it."

He had constant prayers in his family.

In his family he had constant prayers every night, and in the morning too, when he was not hindered by business, which called him early abroad, or brought company unseasonably to him; a misfortune which he very much regretted, whenever it befel him. And he not only prayed with his family, but read the Scriptures to them; and a good portion of them at a time, as his health and time allowed. This is the more to be taken notice of, because it is a most neglected, though most necessary part of religious worship; particularly

among our gentry, who, either through want of religion, or evil shame, have turned the worship of God quite out of their families; which is attended with this fatal consequence, that their servants, and too often their children, are trained up in such a scandalous neglect of God and religion, as very often ends in their eternal ruin.

But he did not think it enough to serve God in private, and pray with his family too; he considered besides all this the duty and benefits of attending the public service of the church; which, during the greater part of his life, he did twice every day; and from which seldom any thing kept him but want of health. And when the hurry of his business hindered him from keeping constantly to one church, and hour of public prayer, he would use all his art to get prayers at some church or other, though not exactly at the time when he most desired them; such different notions had he of his duty, from the generality of the world; who will allege, not only business, but trifles, as an excuse for their absence from the house of God!

Was very
constant at
the prayers
of the
church.

His behaviour at our public prayers was so devout and grave, so intent and composed, as could not but stir up the affections of all who observed it. Talking or sleeping in the house of God was a great offence to him; and when once prayers began, he took no notice of any about him; and was always troubled at those unseasonable salutes, wherein too many allow themselves in time of divine service; condemning that practice, as one of the greatest indecencies of our church.

It has been already observed, that when he came early to church, and was so happy as to get a retired place, he continued at his private devotions until the public service began, or a very little before : and how he employed those happy moments of privacy and devotion in the house of God, the following prayer, mentioned as used by him in the church, before morning prayer began, will shew.

“ Behold, O Lord, this portion of thy family, whom in this place thou hast so often graciously visited and favoured ; and who have addicted and given up themselves to thy service ; are here met together, in behalf of ourselves, and of the rest of our happy number ; and of all our Christian brethren, even thy whole church. We beseech thee to unite our hearts more and more in thyself ; that we may have but one heart, and one mind, as we have but one design, one aim, and hope. Let us now welcome each other (with hearts full of love and joy) into thy presence, as we hope one day to welcome each other into thy presence in glory. Let our civil respects (before thy service begins) be such hearty and holy salutations as the blessed Elizabeth gave to the mother of our Lord : and may we have leave to say to each other, ‘ Hail, thou that art favoured of God, the Lord is with thee.’ Behold we come with united hearts, to beg of thee the confirming of thy grace and favour to us ; we come to present ourselves before thee, with most thankful acknowledgments for thy mercies received ; and to adore thee, who hast so graciously visited us. We come humbly to implore of thee strength against our respective temptations and difficulties in life ; to

beseech thee to supply all our weaknesses, to make us happily victorious against all our corruptions; and more than conquerors, through thee who hast loved us. But, O our bountiful Lord God! if it be such joy to meet those whom we love, now in thy presence; what will it be to meet ten thousand glorified spirits, each of which we shall love infinitely more in thy kingdom of glory, than we can do any creature here! Glory be to thee, O Lord of glory and of love, who hast given us such present pleasure in thy service, and such comfortable hopes of those eternal good things which thou hast prepared for them that love thee. Amen."

He had the justest value, and highest veneration for that great repository of true devotion, the Liturgy of our Church; for which his regard was not in the least abated by the great fervour of his private prayers. For though his devotion was very intense, and full of life and warmth; yet it was calm and governable, and confined within the strictest bounds of sobriety and reason. And such awful apprehensions had he, of the presence of God; so cautious was he of uttering any thing rash with his mouth, before his adorable Majesty; that even his private prayers were a well-digested form: from which he sometimes varied, according to the particular wants and desires of his soul; though even these variations he usually put in writing; and to that purpose, had his prayers reduced to heads, in several columns, with blanks for his additions and variations; frequently reviewing and correcting the whole. But for all public occasions,

His esteem for
the Liturgy of
the Church.

for congregations gathered in churches ; he esteemed forms of prayer not only expedient, but necessary. And such right notions had he of the usefulness of them, and of that popular, but mistaken phrase, “ of praying by the Spirit ;” that I shall here give the reader his thoughts of both, in his own words.

“ Perhaps some of us have been too zealous in crying down this phrase of ‘ praying by the Spirit :’ it is certain that all good men have the Spirit of Christ inspiring them with the temper of Christianity. This temper breeds in them good desires ; and nature furnishes these desires with fit and suitable expressions. It is the inspiring us with these holy desires, flowing from the temper of Christianity, which is the peculiar work of the Spirit of God. Thus the Spirit of God speaks in us, and makes intercession for us, with these holy desires, with which it inspires us ; and, therefore, the expression may be very well allowed, that holy men so inspired do pray by the Spirit. But as upon an extraordinary occasion, I should not refuse to join with a holy man in such an extemporary prayer ; (God forbid I should !) so for ordinary occasions, since the Spirit comes and goes, and the most holy man has not always such immediate influences from it ; I should think, that prayers composed by holy men, set apart for that work, and desiring the assistance of God’s Spirit to it, should have a greater portion of his Spirit in them, than any other constant extemporary prayer. And for a man’s private use, the occasions of his soul do seldom so much vary, but that by degrees, and the constant exercise of this duty, he must come up to a kind of form, or way of ex-

pressing his needs, in the most perfect manner for himself; from which there need be very little variation for extraordinary emergencies. And when all the parts of it are thus settled and adjusted, his duty obliges him not to omit any of these parts; and this is the constant exercise of private devotion, in which a man with a good conscience cannot allow himself to fail."

These were his sentiments of the usefulness of forms of prayer, confirmed by his constantly attending our church service, and by his practice in private; though at the same time, he could not allow himself to be severe in his censures of those who made choice of another way of worship, when he believed conscience was their motive. Railing accusations never came out of his mouth against any: they were too contrary to the example of his Great Master, and that humility and meekness which shined in his life, and appeared in his words, and all his actions. He honoured true piety wherever he saw it; and loved those, who he believed served God sincerely; though their way of worship differed from his own. None considered more the power of custom and education; and the difficulty of relishing modes of worship we are strangers to, till practice removes our prejudices, and observation and experience reconcile us to them. To this purpose he expresses himself in the following meditation.

" Lord, we bless thee for the free liberty of worshipping thee in the way in which we have been brought up; in the way in which we have partaken of thy grace, and received thy Spirit. It is not in our power to reconcile ourselves to any way of worship (though

we thought it lawful) at our pleasure. The grace of devotion is easily checked and stopped; and little informalities have a great influence and effect upon the spiritual part of our minds, by which devotion is exercised: yet if the liberty of worshipping God in the way I am used to, be taken from me, and another afforded me, which I am not used to, and judge lawful, I will endeavour as fast as I can, to acquaint my mind with that way; and in time, I doubt not, but God will enable me to receive benefit by it. It is unreasonable for us to expect, that those who make a conscience of serving God with devotion, but are strangers to our methods, should immediately change their way of worship, and heartily close with ours, though better in itself, and they were satisfied that there were nothing unlawful in it. Time and pains must work that happy change."

In his devotions, both public and private, he avoided every thing that had the least appearance of affectation, or might any way minister to vanity; all violent motions of the body, and unnatural modulations of the voice. His behaviour was grave and simple, natural and very plain. And though never man was less apt to entertain hard thoughts of others, yet he could not but suspect those who were very noisy in their prayers, who affected strange gestures of body, and a forced tone of voice. And I believe the reader will excuse me for delivering his judgment of the true and false signs of devotion in his own words: he will find it so rational and clear, as must needs be very satisfactory to him.

' We mistake ourselves oftentimes in signs of devo-

tion ; outward actions of the body may be signs of devotion ; but we are to judge aright of them, and give them their due

The true and false signs of devotion.

weight. Devotion is to the soul what blood is to the body, which is the life of it : now the best state of the body is, when the blood moves regularly and evenly in it : so as for us to be least sensible, that we have such a thing as moving blood within us ; which is, when it is in its natural condition, and we are in firm health. We do not think we have most life when we have convulsive and extraordinary motions in our bodies, these things proceed not from the free moving of the blood, but from the stoppage of the blood and spirits ; from which nature endeavouring to set itself free, excites those violent motions in the body. These are not signs of health, but of sickness. In respect of our souls, the best state is, when our minds in our devotions have a composed and gracious intercourse with God, in such intentness, and recollectedness of thought, that we are hardly sensible ourselves, that we are at our devotions. Thus it is when we are in firm health of mind, our conscience right before God, and our affections sanctified, and free from incumbrances. It is when we come short of these in any respect, that our devotion becomes tumultuary, and shews itself in outward signs : bodily motions proceed only from the convulsions of our devotions, and are signs of obstructions in them, not of their free passage. The conflict that arises between our flesh and our spirit begets those odd symptoms. It is when we find it difficult to raise up our minds to God, hard to keep our thoughts in-

tent and recollected, as we would have them; that we beat our breasts, that we cast up our eyes, that we move our hands. They are signs at best, not that we are devout, but that we would be so. Every sudden motion of the head, or hand, or eye, is not a sign of an orderly, but of a convulsive devotion; and is the effect of a troubled and discomposed state of mind. Not that these are always to be censured: such troubles are many times our unhappiness, not our sin. Thus perhaps it was with Hannah, when she prayed unto the Lord in the bitterness of her soul, 1 Sam. i. 10. And Eli observing her outward gestures, particularly the motion of her lips, thought hardly of her. Our blessed Lord, when he offered up his last public prayer to his Father, the perpetual and most gracious legacy of his love to his Church, and the model of his continual intercession in heaven for us, began it with a fixt lifting up of his eyes to heaven. 'When Jesus had spoken these things, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said,' John xvii. 1. This cannot be reckoned of the sort we are speaking of; for it was only a composed setting of his eyes in one posture. If his prostrating himself on the ground in his great agony, be offered as an instance of the other sort, and it be argued from thence, that such violent motions of the body are not arguments of a discomposed or more imperfect devotion, because our Lord's devotion cannot at any time be supposed imperfect: it is not necessary to say any thing to it; only this, that such discomposed or imperfect devotion, as could be without sin, may be safely applied to our Saviour, in respect to his human nature; but in re-

spect of us, it is certain that such trouble or distraction as our blessed Saviour underwent, at that time, would necessarily make our devotion more imperfect; though not necessarily less prevalent with God, when we offer unto Him the best service that we can in the anguish of our spirits.

“ What has been said of bodily motions, is to be said also of the tone of our voice in prayer. The vehement earnestness of this is not always a sign of the intenseness of our thoughts, or devotion of our minds; but rather the contrary. A modest even-framed voice, with a cheerful accent, or modulation of our words, is the natural expression of a devout spirit; much less can I look upon that voice to have any part in devotion, which runs all in one tone of a melancholy dejectedness. (I will not call it whining, because prophane men, who are ready to scoff at all religion, have made this word too light :) but it is certain, the thoughts of the praying person may be at the other end of the world, consistently enough with such a tone; so little necessary connection is there between it and true devotion. The mind of such a person perhaps has been devout, and he is melancholy that he is not so still: but unwilling to be at pains enough to make himself so. If there be any that take up such a tone purely out of hypocrisy, I should be loth to pass so hard a censure upon them as the poet does; unless they manifestly discover great contrariety to their devotions, in their lives and practices :

“ *Quisquis ficto sub Dæmone prodit,
Crede mihi, multum Dæmonis intus habet.*”

That great infirmity of human nature, with which the best men are frequently disturbed, "Inattention, and wandering thoughts in prayer," Mr. Bonnell had very well considered; he himself not being entirely free from it. It is what he often complains of with great passion, and for which he prescribes the properest remedies. His meditations upon wandering thoughts in prayer are too many to be here inserted; yet a few of them I cannot pass over. They shew a mind so deeply affected with the sense of its imperfections; so desirous to have its burdens removed; yet so patient and submissive under them; that they must need make due impressions on every devout reader.

His complaints of being disturbed with wandering thoughts in prayer; with the remedies he prescribes for that infirmity.

"Lord," says he in one place, "it is but a few hours ago, that I was triumphing in thy favour; and in the blessed liberty thou gavest me of attending upon thee. What have I done since to make myself so miserable, and lose all this privilege; that from being attentive to a whole prayer, I can now scarce attend to a few sentences? Surely watching unto prayer consists in carefully avoiding all those things that have too strong an influence on our minds and affections, and are apt too forcibly to take up and engage our thoughts. But there is no watching against bodily disorders, which God thinks fit to send upon us, (O that they may be all in mercy!) and which make every trifle harass our thoughts as much as an important affair.

"Pity me, O God of all pity, who puttest pity into the hearts of men towards one another; and who yet

are influenced but by slender drops of thy overflowing ocean of goodness. Fain would my heart come before thee; fain would my thoughts ascend to thee; and stay themselves upon thee: but like feathers thrown up into the air, a cross wind of earthly distractions comes and hurries them away, and scatters them over all the earth. If there is pain in life, surely it is to desire to serve thee, and not to be able. But the desire shall certainly prevail at last; for thou art in the desire, but the inability is not from thee."

Again, in another place, he thus expresses himself:

"It seems an intolerable burden to me, to be thus distracted in my devotions by worldly things, and makes me impatient, till I may get more out of the way of them, by changing my employment and station in the world. Yet the thought of this itself is damped, when I consider these two things: first, that bodily indispositions may make my head as unfit to attend on holy things, in the midst of the greatest leisure, and most sacred employment, as worldly business does now; and that even then, charity will oblige me to descend to the worldly matters of my friends: orphans, widows, and distressed persons must be assisted and relieved. Secondly, What shall become of the rest of mankind; of my Christian brethren, who remain under the same circumstances in which I am now; and from which they cannot get free, though perhaps I may? Must they not go to heaven, nor have comfort on the earth in the worship and service of God? God forbid! Why then should not I be content to bear my burden in life as well as

they ; and struggle with difficulties in common with them ? this is not the place of our enjoyment, but of our warfare ; therefore I will humbly prepare myself to the combat, O my God : and when thou seest me ready to go on to fight, in obedience to thy pleasure, thou wilt order for me what thou knowest for the good and comfort of my soul."

Thus you see that all Mr. Bonnell's advances in the divine life, did not raise him above the infirmities of humanity, and the incumbrances of flesh and blood. And this is matter of great peace to the pious but weak Christian, who labours under the same difficulties, and is apt to be too much dejected when assaulted by vain and worldly thoughts in prayer. For these are trials which will exercise the faith and patience of the greatest favourites of God ; and from which only heaven will entirely set us free. But then if we would have peace of mind under these disturbances, we must not only pray against them with Mr. Bonnell's zeal, but endeavour, as he did, to prevent or remove them. And some of the remedies which he prescribes for this disease, are these that follow :

" The happiest means of gaining recollection when we pray, is to have nothing to do but to pray. It is so hard to compose our thoughts, which are apt to fly after every trifle, and to find innumerable things to take them off from their duty ; that we must go to work by art, and deal with them as we do with irrational creatures ; some of which (as hawks and horses) we hoodwink, when we would keep them intent on particular matters. We must shut all

other businesses out from our minds at that time. We must neither have any thing to do ourselves, nor expose ourselves to be disturbed by others. We must not only enter into our closets, but shut our doors about us. The great art to attain this happiness lies in saying, 'I have nothing to do this half hour, but to wait on my God.' For if we determine ourselves to no time, but are in haste to do something else, as soon as we have done our prayers, it is a great hazard if ever we are recollected. This is spoken of the orderly course of our devotions, when we have nothing amiss in our bodies or minds. But if either care, trouble, or indisposition, distract our thoughts, and make them apt to ramble from our duty, there will be more pains still requisite: it is not enough to set ourselves a certain time, but we must lay aside so much at large, as will be necessary to recite our devotions attentively. If when your mind is in a good frame, a quarter of an hour is sufficient for this; you are not to think much, if now you can be able to do it in a whole hour. That is, if you can recite your devotions so in an hour, as to be able to attend to each article of them. For taking in the large intervals, in which (in such a case) your thoughts will be quite lost, and roving far away from the matter they are about, and in which time you proceed nothing at all in your devotions; and that many times you will be forced to repeat that same sentence over and over again, before you will be able to acquit yourself of your duty, and attend to what you say: thrice your usual time, or more, may well be supposed to be spent; and it is well if you come

off so. From which we see, that patience is a virtue as necessary sometimes in devotion as in afflictions; and the want of patience does as often make our devotions defective, as the want of recollection.

“ Another rule to prevent distractions in prayer, is to give no way to vain amusements out of it. By vain amusements, I mean, thinking of things that never will be, or perhaps never can be; mere chimeras. It is a good mastery of our thoughts, to be able to reject these immediately, as soon as we reflect that our minds are busied about them: for, perhaps, our minds may be not a good way in them before we take notice of it. It is enough then, when we find it, to cast them out, and say, ‘ Away with this vain amusement: to what purpose this chimera? Why do I spend time and thought about it, who have so many necessary things to take up both?’ ”

Again, in another place, he advises thus.

“ If thou art troubled with inattentiveness, and wandering thoughts in prayer, consider whence they spring, and that will discover what they are. If they are such, as depend upon any affection, or passion in thy heart, which is not yet mortified as it should be; then, believe me, they are unclean birds, and pollute thy sacrifice. If they spring from any thing that is thy burden, and which thou labourest to subdue; it is still a little better. Be not discouraged, cast them from thee calmly, beg pardon, and pursue thy duty. If they be the thoughts of business, in which thy affections are not concerned; only that thou art unhappily engaged in an over-multiplicity of affairs; rid thy hands by degrees, as fast as thou canst, that

the waters may settle, and thy thoughts be free to wait upon God. For this diversion from his service is evil, but not to be helped till the business that feeds it be withdrawn.

“Lastly, if the thoughts be only of indifferent matters and trifles, wandering on several things without coherence, to which thou hast neither affection nor engagement: rouse up and awaken thyself; put thy heart into the presence of God, and lie naked before his majesty. For this is the sleepiness of the head, and the drowsiness of the senses. For as in sleep, our thoughts run incoherently to and fro; so this is a degree of sleep, and thy thoughts ramble proportionably to this degree: but check them, awaken them, and bemoan thyself, and say; Pardon, O Lord, the behaviour of thy servant, so unsuitable to thy tremendous Majesty. Thy holy angels may justly have indignation against such a wretch as I am, that presume to treat the adorable majesty of their Lord with so little reverence and respect: while they, who are so much above me, so high in eminency and honour, yet pay thy infinite Majesty infinitely more awful homage. Ah! poor soul, what advantages dost thou lose of improving thy soul in grace! What strength, what spiritual knowledge, what comfort, what humility, what divine love mightest thou have acquired by dwelling in the presence of God, and sitting at his feet, in this time, which thou hast perfectly lost in vanity and dreaming? Assist me, O my God, to conquer this evil also, and then my soul shall be happy in conversing with thee.”

I shall conclude the account of his devotions, with

a copy of his private prayers, which I find among his papers, which will give the reader a clearer view of Mr. Bonnell's piety, than any thing I am able to say of it, and which I hope many devout Christians will offer up to God with great comfort in their retirements.

A PRAYER.

Composed
about the
year 1691,
or 1692.

“ O Lord my God, heavenly Father! Maker of all things; Judge of all men, most worthy Judge eternal; thou art a righteous judge, strong and patient, and thou art provoked every day; and that by my wretchedness. I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? God be merciful to me a sinner; mercy, mercy, O my God, in and through thy dear Son: accept of that full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, which he hath offered upon the cross, not only for my sins, but for the sins of the world, on my behalf, and of thy infinite mercies make me partaker of it. O my most gracious Saviour, vouchsafe yet to own me before thy Father for thine, and obtain for me pardon and forgiveness for all my sins. Accept of me, O most merciful Father, in him thy beloved Son, as thou hast enabled me humbly to offer up myself to thee through him; and grant me grace to serve thee faithfully, sincerely, uprightly, heartily, all my days.

“ Fill, O fill my soul with zeal for thy glory, and with longings for the coming of thy kingdom, that thou, O most gracious Lord Jesu, mayest see abundantly of thy seed, and of the travail of thy soul, and be comforted over all the trouble and sorrow

which thou hast endured for our sakes, in bringing forth salvation to the world ; that thou mayest be exalted in the hearts of men, and that the kingdom of sin and Satan may be done away. Increase the number of thy own servants, strengthen their graces, be glorified in them, and let their hearts ever rejoice in thee. Fill my soul with such a deep sense of thy wonderful love to us, and of thy bitter sufferings for us, as may provoke me, for thy sake, to love those souls whom thou hast so tenderly loved, and so dearly bought ; and to endeavour to spend and be spent for them.

“ Lord, have mercy upon us in these sinful nations : spare us, good Lord, we have grievously sinned : righteous are thy judgments which thou hast brought upon us ; pardon our crying sins, which have provoked them ; pardon our unreformedness under them. Pardon, mercifully pardon the unsuitable returns we have made to thy wonderful mercies. Be entreated for us, good Lord. Be glorified, if it be thy gracious will, by our reformation, and not by our destruction. Turn all our hearts to thee, from the highest to the lowest. Turn thou us, and so shall we be turned ; send forth a spirit of reformation into the midst of us, and make us a holy people. Stir up the hearts of thy servants whom thou hast set over us, that they may be zealous and happy instruments in thy hand of promoting this good work, and may be blessed in their deed. Grant us princes to rule in righteousness, and pastors after thy own heart. Send forth painful labourers into thy Church, and bless all that wait at thy holy altar with soundness of doctrine and

piety, and exemplariness of life and conversation, particularly those for whom I am bound to pray. Grant that they may glorify thee on earth, and be glorified with thee in heaven.

“Comfort, I implore, all thy poor servants that suffer for the testimony of a good conscience; visit them, O gracious Lord, in all their prisons, their dungeons, their galleys, their banishments, their distresses. Thou knowest them, thou seest them under all: O stay their souls upon thee, and let their lives be precious in thy sight, and their deaths right dear. Supply abundantly to all their souls the want of thy holy ordinances, so richly vouchsafed to us, and in thy good time deliver them, as thou hast so wonderfully and graciously delivered us. O that our whole souls may rejoice in thee, and bless thee for these thy wonderful mercies to us; O make us faithful to thee in all our holy vows and engagements.

“Vouchsafe to bless thy servants (my sister and her husband) with the fear of thy holy name, and with grace to bring up their children in thy fear; O that they and theirs may be thine. Bless all my near relations and dear friends, make them thy servants. Bless and reward all my benefactors; bless all whom I have injured by word or deed, in soul, body, goods, or good name. Of thy infinite mercy pardon these my sins, and remove the evil effects and influences of my sins, wheresoever they have reached. Reward a hundred-fold into the bosom of all that offer up, or have offered up prayers unto thy Majesty in my behalf; bless them, good Lord, and all that belong to them.

“ Be gracious to all of us, whom thou hast admitted at any time together to thy holy table ; strengthen our hearts, O most gracious Lord Jesus, in thy ways ; strengthen us against all and each of our temptations and difficulties in life, and make us more than conquerors in thy love. Let the thoughts of thy wonderful love be ever sweet to our souls, and to my soul, and let us love to meditate thy bitter sufferings. [‘ O fit and prepare our hearts, whom thou dost now invite to feast with thee, at this holy time approaching, that our hearts may burn within us, while thou art pleased to converse with us, that thou mayest then vouchsafe to be known to us in breaking of bread.’] O let us not be of the world, as thou wert not of it ; keep us from the evil of it, till thou shalt bring us to thyself in peace.

“ O my Father, O my God, I am in thy hand, and rejoice above all things in being so ; do with me what seems good in thy sight ; only grant me pardon for those sins which continually provoke thy rod, and sanctify every stroke of it to me ; make it effectual to wean my heart from the world, and from all sinful affections, and root out the remains of my sinfully contracted habits, that I may be pure and holy before thee, and unreprieveable in thy sight.

“ O be gracious to all thy poor servants that are in misery and distress of mind, body, or estate, all that lie on the bed of sickness, all that want the comforts that I enjoy : ease them, gracious Lord, and relieve them, give them patience under thy hand, submission to thy will, and a happy issue, in thy good time, out of all their afflictions ; and give me a heart

to assist and relieve them according to the abilities thou givest me, as a faithful steward of those good things thou hast entrusted me with for their use.

“ O grant me a thankful heart for all thy mercies; for thy infinite goodness in making me thy own handy-work, and giving me a being capable to love thee! For all thy fatherly tenderness to me, care of me, and gracious dealings with me in my whole life. For thy wonderful patience and forbearance in not cutting me off in my sins, but exercising me with thy adorable gracious providences, to awaken and bring off my soul from sin and folly; for delivering me out of all my dangers, and from all my fears and terrors. For making me thy care hitherto, and giving me the comfortable hopes that thou dost and wilt continue me so: for calling me to rejoice before thee, for making me to sit as an acceptable guest at thy table, treating me as a reconciled friend, giving me the sacrifice of thy dear Son, whom my sins had slain, in token of thy perfect reconciliation to me, and passing by all my unworthiness. For loving us, and that so, as to give him, the Son of love, out of thy bosom for our redemption. For finding thyself a ransom for us, which we could not have thought of, which we dared not to have asked. For that thy inconceivable love, O most gracious Lord Jesu, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, who takest away the sins of the world, which thou hast borne, and dost bear to us; which brought thee from thy Father's glory to visit us, to take upon thee our nature, to become miserable with us, and to humble thyself to the lowest condition of men: for all the good which thou hast done, and the evil which

thou hast suffered for us in thy body and in thy soul. For all that bitter pain, and shame, and sorrow of thy soul unto death : for the agony and bloody sweat, and terrors and dereliction of thy Father, which thou hast endured for and from my sins, in making atonement for them to thy Father's wrath, which they had provoked. (O that I may add no more to this sad weight, but may be faithful to thy love for ever.) For those tender expressions of thy love vouchsafed to thy servants and followers, to shew us how much thou lovest mankind, and to provoke our hearts to love thee, the tenderest of lovers. For those comforting and encouraging words to them, while thy soul so much needed to be comforted. For those kind invitations to us to pray unto thee, and in thy name ; for praying for us upon earth, interceding for us continually in heaven. For promising to visit us, and to comfort us with thy Spirit, and fulfilling thy word so graciously to thy servants. For promising to prepare places for us, and to take us to thyself : O fit us for thyself, and let our souls long to be with thee.

“ For granting me to be born in thy Church, and of religious parents ; for washing me in thy baptism, making me a lively member of thy body, and instructing me in thy doctrine of truth and holiness. For permitting me to love thee ; for bringing me to thy table, and making me rejoice before thee : for pardoning my sins, and saying that thou art the propitiation for them, and presenting me to thy Father reconciled in thyself. For feeding my soul with thy precious body and blood, giving me those pledges of thy love, and assured conveyances of grace, and strength, and

comfort, and immortal happiness with thyself. For saying to my soul so graciously, that thou wouldest not have given me these good things if thou wert not reconciled to me, that thou art my Saviour, and wilt be my Saviour for ever, and that this thy precious blood shall save me from the terrors of the great day. O pardon my unworthiness of these thy inestimable favours, and pardon my sins against thy love.

“ Sanctify the friendship which thou hast granted me with [these] thy servants ; O that our prayers may be heard for each other, while our hearts are united in thy fear and love, and graciously unite them more and more so. Strengthen the hearts of us thy servants against all our corruptions and temptations, enable us to consecrate ourselves faithfully and entirely to thy service, grant that we may provoke each other to love and serve thee, and grow up together before thee in thy fear and love, to thy heavenly kingdom ; and by thy infinite mercies vouchsafe to bring us to rejoice together before thee for ever.

“ Out of thy fulness, O most gracious Lord Jesus, let me receive grace for grace, humility, meekness, purity, holiness, resoluteness and constancy in devotion, attentiveness and recollection of mind in coming before thee ; patience in waiting upon thee, weanedness from the world ; resigitation to thy holy will, and contentedness in all conditions ; sincerity and uprightness of heart before thee, my God, and towards thee, my God, and towards all men, and universal charity.

“ I adore thy condescending love, O Lord God our sanctifier, in giving thyself to thy creatures, and vouchsafing to be with thy Church and servants always ;

to assist, sanctify, strengthen and comfort us; to carry on and perfect the work of redemption in each of our hearts; to seal us to thy heavenly kingdom, to unite us to thyself, and to each other, by vouchsafing to be the Lord and principal of all our life: for thy gracious motions and holy inspirations to me a wretch; O pardon my rebellings against thee, my grievings of thee; be not provoked to leave my poor soul; graciously assist me, and make me meekly attentive and readily obedient to all thy secret motions, that thou mayest conform me in all things to thy holy will.

“O my God, I praise thee for thy continual preservation of me; for thy fatherly protection over me, [(*) the night past, for refreshing me with comfortable sleep, and bringing me in peace to the light of this day,] and for all the outward comforts which thou surroundest me with, for the measure of health and strength which thou givest me, and for leave now humbly to pray unto thee: O accept of my poor services, pardon the sinfulness of these, and of all my holy duties: receive me into thy gracious protection and keeping [(*) this day.] Let me be in thy fear all the day long, and set thee before my face continually: O bless me and all my dear friends [(*) this day especially] with the blessings of thy children. Amen.”

(*) At night say, “the day past, and bringing me in peace to the end of it now before thee.”

(*) This night.

(*) This night especially.

. Our Father, &c.

Undressing, say the fourth Psalm.

Kneeling down before stepping into bed.

“ Good Lord, pardon my sins against thy love : let me lie down this night reconciled to thee my God, and in peace and charity with all the world.”

At lying down.

“ Lord, pardon my unworthiness of the least of all thy mercies, particularly of these comfortable conveniences which thy fatherly tenderness doth provide for my repose ; sanctify them to me, O gracious Lord, and comfort all that want them ; all that are now in pain, sickness, trouble, sorrow, and all that labour in the agony of death. Grant that I may lie down with thee, and rise up with thee, and when I awake up, whether in life or in eternity, O let me be present with thee. Fill my heart with thy fear and love, and vouchsafe to be the first and last in all my thoughts ; that whether sleeping or waking, living or dying, I may be thine. O thou Shepherd of Israel, who never slumberest nor sleepest, vouchsafe to watch over me, and keep me this night, and preserve me from sin and danger, and all illusions of the enemy, for thy infinite mercies. Amen.”

Waking in the night.

“ I adore thy condescending Majesty, O my God, who vouchsafest thyself to be the pilot of the ship,

the charioteer of the chariot, which carries me lying at ease and peace, through the seas and wilderness of this night : thou art near to me, and I desire to speak to thee, to bless thee, and adore thee, who art so near to me. Amen."

Waking in the morning.

" O my God, who hast vouchsafed to carry me through the seas of this night, and to set me down in peace and safety on the shore of this day, where I would be, among my acquaintance of the things of this world ; let me not enter into conversation with them, till I have first payed my humble homage to thee, my most adorable and gracious God. I lift my heart to thee."

First getting out of bed, kneeling.

" To thee, my most adorable Preserver, I humbly offer up my preserved self ; my body, my soul, my members, my senses, my faculties, my thoughts, my words, my desires, my inclinations, my affections, my actions, to be governed, guided, and sanctified by thee, and to be made conformable to thy holy will this day and always. Amen."

Washing.

" Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin. O wash me with thy precious blood, O most gracious Lord Jesus, who hast

loved us, and washed us from our sins. Except thou wash me, I have no part in thee. Thou hast made me sensible that I stand in need of thy amazing condescension to be washed from the stains which I daily contract, that thou mayest engage me to practise daily the same condescension to my Christian brethren. Amen."

Kneeling down in the day-time.

"O my God, to thee I humbly offer up myself, accept of me graciously to be thine in thy dear Son. Thou hast made me what I am, and given me what I have; I live by thee, O that I may live to thee. By thee I am this moving body, and this thinking soul. O that both may pay homage to thee; thou upholdest and sustainest me every moment, I am a living monument of thy mercy, O that I may be a living monument of thy praise: glory be to thee, O Lord, most high. Amen."

Thus did Mr. Bonnell discharge the great duty of prayer, in every part of it, both public and private: and as he prayed without ceasing, so he was a constant and devout guest at the Lord's table: and, therefore, I now come to shew what his practice was, with respect to the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

He was very early touched with a lively sense of his obligations to commemorate our Saviour's passion, in that holy mystery; and I find from his own meditations, that as he improved in knowledge and years, his desires after that divine feast grew stronger still. For there he found all the endearing comforts of reli-

gion ; God's goodness displayed, and his justice satisfied : the contemplation of which gives the truest peace and joy to humble and penitent minds.

A great part of his private writings consist of meditations preparative to the Sacrament, or thanksgivings after it : so that for several years of his life, hardly a week passed over, but he put down some communion thoughts in writing ; some meditation or prayer upon the love of God to mankind ; or some part of our Saviour's life or sufferings ; especially during the late troubles, when he needed the supports of religion most, and seems to have enjoyed them in a greater degree than at other times.

After his settling in Dublin, his constant practice, for many years, was, to communicate twice every month ; beside all the solemn times, when the Holy Sacrament is administered. But such longing desires had he after that sacred memorial of our Saviour's love, that he could not allow himself to want it whenever it might be had ; so that at last, he received every Lord's-day.

Though his life was a constant preparation for the Holy Communion, yet he had very strict and particular retirements in order to put his mind into that divine frame, which he judged so necessary for near and solemn approach to God : and these happy retirements were employed in strict examinations of his life and a severe enquiry after his smallest failings ; and the warmest meditations upon the love of God, and bitter passion of our blessed Saviour. And in his latter years, he lamented nothing more, than that his time was so taken up with business, that his re-

tirements were interrupted ; and, consequently, his thoughts not so much his own as they used to be : and particularly, it troubled him that he was often forced to be late at his office on Saturdays, lest his going to the Sacrament the next day, might have an ill effect upon his servants ; and tempt them to presume too far, and approach the Lord's table without sufficient preparation : " For though," as he would sometimes say, " I steal minutes at my office, they are not enough to satisfy myself, much less to give good example to others."

As it was his great study to prepare himself aright for the Holy Sacrament, that so he might come to it with a truly penitent heart, a lively faith, and inflamed affections ; so during the whole administration, so intense were his thoughts, so earnest were his prayers, that those who were near, and observed him, hardly ever beheld him without tears ; which he concealed as much as he could, by keeping close in the most private corner of the seat ; and he was forced to take some time, to make his face fit to appear before the congregation. For though a sorrowful countenance does very well become every devout communicant ; yet his principal and constant practice was, to avoid every thing that might make him observed by others, or any way raise the character of his piety among men ; reserving that chiefly to the eye of God.

When he returned from church, he immediately retired into his closet, and spent a considerable time in his own private prayers and praises. And as his wife was still his fellow-communicant ; so with her

he prayed before dinner, " Blessing God for that happy opportunity given them both, of commemorating our Saviour's sufferings, and receiving the pledges of his reconciled favour ; and praying for all those who had been partakers with them that day, or at any other time, of those blessed means of grace, which they had then received."

That unhappy controversy, which disturbs our church, about the posture in receiving the Holy Sacrament, was a great trouble to him : his great humility did then, in a particular manner, prompt him to fall low on his knees. And in one place, speaking of the Sacrament, he thus delivers his sense of that dispute.

" What need these nice disputes about posture in this holy exercise ? We sit at God's table, though we kneel in the church. The favour and the privilege he grants us, is that of acceptable guests, who have leave to sit in his presence, and at meat with him. It is our souls that sit ! well may our bodies be as they that serve. The table, which we call the holy altar, is but a shelf of wood : God's table is a spiritual thing ; it implies privilege, and favour, and honour, and freedom : and those that are admitted to this divine feast, sit at his table, whatever posture their bodies be in. Were Christ indeed on earth, the table he sat at, we should expect (if we were favoured) to sit at too ; because equality in posture is honour ; but now he sits not at this outward table which is before us ; why then should we ? The food which we receive, comes not from thence to us, but from heaven. We sit at the table from

whence our food comes. It is true, on our table, the holy elements are impregnated with the materials of life; like the first framing of a living creature, or embryo, before it is quickened: but they are quickened with spiritual life, only upon the faith of each receiver, which God hath appointed to be the concurring instrument, or means of this divine quickening. Then they become to us the seeds of glory, and the assured conveyances of spiritual nourishment, and immortal happiness. And as such they come to us from a higher table: and while we are admitted to sit at that table, well may we be content, and well does it become us, to kneel outwardly in the church. While we sit with the church triumphant, well may we be content to kneel with the church militant.

“ O Lord, while my body kneels outwardly in thy house, and my soul sits at thy mystical table in thy presence, through thy great favour: (for it is thou, O my most merciful Saviour, hast been pleased to bring me, and seat me there, else how should I have dared to have appeared?) what is the food thou wilt give me from this thy table? It is immortal love, wrapt up in bread. Surely then this is glorious bread, which contains so infinite a treasure, and may well be called thy body, and the pledge of thy love. And is immortal love the mystical food of our souls? O most loving Saviour, who wert content to have thy body broken, that thou mightest nourish and sustain us with this precious food; give us ever of this bread, and be it unto us according to thy gracious intentions. Amen.”

His meditations upon the Sacrament are very nu-

merous, as I have already said ; so that, instead of being inserted in a life, they would make almost a volume themselves. A spirit of primitive piety runs through them : and it plainly appears that the author of them spoke from his heart, and was deeply affected with the subject about which he wrote. I shall here give the reader a taste of them ; and by these few that here follow, he may make a judgment of the rest.

“ We pray to God, and our Saviour, for pardon by his agony and bitter sufferings ; how does this oblige God to pardon us ? What right have we to insist on these, and represent them before God ? Women indeed expostulate with their husbands, by the common pledges of their love ; their children, by their mutual endearments : and sometimes one friend with another, by their common sufferings in the same cause. And it is an argument prevailing upon human nature, to yield to what is so desired. But still there must be something common. We must have a share, and interest ourselves in what we so plead by, if we hope to prevail. When, therefore, we use this sort of expostulation with God as the strongest and highest argument to obtain what we desire, there must be something common in what we plead by, or the argument loseth its force. Because the Son of God endured bitter sufferings, what then ? What is that to us, if we are strangers to these sufferings ? It is like the case our Saviour himself puts ; ‘ Thou hast prophesied in our streets, we have eaten and drank in thy presence.’ To whom he will reply, ‘ What then ? Ye are strangers to me, I know you not.’ So

that it is not enough, that the Son of God hath suffered for us ; we must have a common share in it, and be mutual sufferers with him, and then indeed we have leave to expostulate with God by his sufferings, and shall prevail : we have a kind of right to mention them, and God will graciously be wrought upon by it. But how shall we be mutual sufferers with him ? By laying to heart what he hath suffered for us ; by being wounded with his wounds, and bruised with his strokes ; by having the reproaches of them that reproached him fall on us ; by having our souls sorrowful with his soul, even unto death ; by trembling at the wrath of God due to our sins, which caused him such amazement, in making atonement for them. Let us go to Mount Calvary, and endeavour to put ourselves in his place. We are they, Lord, who have sinned, let us suffer the pains. Thou hast done nothing amiss, why then should thy holy body suffer these tortures ? Thy righteous soul feel this anguish ? But since we cannot bring thee down, nor exchange conditions with thee, O that we could give thee one moment's ease ! O that we had not so sinned, as to procure these thy tortures ! O wretches that we are ! to have brought this load upon thee ! See, O my soul, what thou hast done ! They have brought thy greatest friend, the beloved of God, his only Son, the everlasting Prince, to this sad condition ! Canst thou see it without trembling ? Canst thou see it and live ? It would be grief extraordinary, only to see him in this condition ; what heart could not be moved at it, that knows who it is that suffers ? But to be thyself the guilty cause of it, oughtest thou not

to wish, that the like pains might fall on thee, and that thou mightest suffer with him a little, to cover thy confusion? For this confusion to an ingenuous soul, that truly stood by our Lord in this condition, would certainly be a torment so great, that one would almost wish to hang on a cross to divert it by a new pain. O my Redeemer, if knowing what I now know, I had stood by thy cross, I hope the confusion of my soul would be nothing less than what I have here described. Since then, I believe thee to have suffered all this, as much as if I had stood by thee, and that thou art pleased to represent thy sufferings often again to us, and to be set forth as evidently crucified among us: O strengthen my imagination and my faith, from mystical representation of bread and wine, broken and poured out, to pass to thy real sufferings, and take up some of those affections, some degree of that confusion (if, alas! I cannot take up the whole of it) which I should be seized with at thy actual crucifixion: then may I have leave, O my Saviour, having suffered with thee, to plead with thy Father by thy sufferings. By the agony of thy soul, when thou didst make atonement for sins, pardon my sins, and have mercy on me. Wherefore didst thou endure that agony, but to obtain remission of sins, that thou mightest distribute, and give it to those that humbly cry unto thee for it; that thou mightest give gifts unto men of the trophies purchased with thy blood? My soul is wounded by thy agony; O let me partake of the fruits of it. David's law was, that those that stayed by the stuff, should share with those that took the spoil: Lord, who is able to bear thee company in

thy grievous conflict? Weak and faint we must be left behind: but our soul goes along with thee, is bound up with thine, and is wholly filled with concern for thee. O let us partake of the fruit of thy labours, of the issues of thy sufferings. Thou hast obtained pardon and peace; O bestow some share of it upon thy servants.

“Let me go on, O my Lord, to suffer with thee, while I live in this sinning world. O vouchsafe to let me have a share in thy sufferings, and speak peace to my soul; that I may pass my days in an humble confidence here, and rejoice with thee one day hereafter, in forgetting both thine, and my misery and trouble. Amen.”

At another time he offered up the following prayer, with respect to every part of our Saviour's bitter passion; the commemorating of which, is the principal end of the Holy Communion.

“O my Saviour, O my God! By thy lying prostrate on the earth in a cold night; and thy soul's being exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: by thy grievous agony, in which thou didst sweat drops of blood, between thy wonderful love to thy church, and the infirmity of thy human nature, which drew back at the apprehension of those sufferings which thou wert to pass through for us: by thy thrice lifting up strong cries to thy Father, to remove from thee that bitter cup, if it had been his will, and been possible for his justice, otherwise to be satisfied; by the firm resolution which thou didst take up, to go through that great work for our sakes; and by thy meek resigning thyself to thy Father's will, and ready con-

curing with his wonderful love to us, in designing to perfect our redemption, by thy sorrows : by thy being betrayed by thy own disciple, and suffering that sinful wretch to kiss thy blessed lips : by thy being apprehended, rudely bound, hurried away as a malefactor : by thy being forsaken of all thy disciples, and none of them daring to own, or stand by thee : by thy being insulted over, and treated as the meanest slave, without respect or pity, and carried to and fro from magistrate to magistrate, from tribunal to tribunal, and every where falsely accused : by thy being buffeted and spit upon, mocked and reviled : by thy being crowned with thorns, rudely pressed down on thy sacred head, and entering into thy temples : by thy being arrayed in a mock habit, and a reed put into thy hand, instead of a sceptre : by thy being sentenced to death as a criminal, and condemned to the vilest, most painful and reproachful kind of death : by thy being scourged by merciless hands ; the ploughers ploughing upon thy back, and making long furrows : by thy being loaded with a heavy cross : by thy being stripped of thy clothes, and fastened to it with nails, struck through the most tender and nervous parts, thy hands and thy feet ; so that the iron entered into thy very soul : by thy being crucified in the midst between two malefactors, as if thou hadst been the greatest of them : by thy being reared up on the cross, and the weight of thy body hanging on four wounds : by thy being exposed naked to the view of the world, bearing the shame, as well as the torment of my sin : by thy precious blood issuing out of thy wounds, and forming a laver for my sins, and

of the whole world: by the feverish heat of thy whole body, occasioned by the extremity of thy pains: by thy tongue's cleaving to the roof of thy mouth, and having vinegar given thee when thou wert thirsty, thy soul in the mean time more vehemently thirsting after our salvation: by thy having refused the wine, and myrrh, which was given thee to stupify thy senses, because thou wouldst feel all the pain of thy crucifixion for us, in its greatest sharpness, without the least mitigation: by the tender regard which thou hadst in the midst of thy violent pains, for thy holy mother, and beloved disciple: by the sword which pierced through her soul, and the sorrow which wounded his spirit, and the extreme affliction which overwhelmed them both, to behold thee suffering: by the gracious comforts vouchsafed the penitent thief, in the midst of thy own distress: by the anguish of thy soul, not to be expressed, in beholding the wrath of thy Father, so hotly flaming against us, for those sins of ours which thou didst bear in thy own body on the tree; and that too under so great weakness of body, that both made thee cry out, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!' By thy voluntary giving up the ghost, (when thou mightest have brought down thyself from the cross, and that no man could take away thy life from thee,) that the work of our redemption might be finished by thee: by thy blessed side being pierced with a spear, entering into thy heart, and letting out the last remains of thy blood, that thou mightest shed all of it for us, and give full proof to the world, of thy being truly dead: by thy soul's being separated from

thy body, (that desirable union being violently dissolved) and its passing into the state of the dead; and of perfect separation; and sanctifying that middle state to thy servants, for their souls to rest in till the resurrection.

“ By all these several sorts and degrees of thy sufferings: by all this bitter pain, and sorrow, and shame, and agony, and anguish, which thou didst endure in thy body, and in thy soul, for miserable men, and for me a miserable wretch :

“ Have mercy upon me.

“ For wherefore didst thou suffer all this for us, and for me, but that thou mightest have mercy upon me? My sins, O Lord, have occasioned all this to thee; for less than this would not have atoned for them. Though in respect of thee, who wert the sufferer, O thou eternal Son of God, these thy sufferings are sufficient to atone for innumerable worlds: yet since thou didst suffer them for me, I beseech thee, by the remembrance of all their bitterness, to have mercy upon me: thou didst suffer the shame, and the pain, and the sorrow due to my sins; O pardon those sins which thou hast so dearly atoned for.

“ Since then, O my Saviour, thou commandest me to commemorate these thy sorrows, and to do this in remembrance of thee; Amen. I will do it in remembrance that I have wounded, and grieved, and bruised thee: in remembrance that I have made thee behold the wrath of thy Father, and separated thy precious blood from thy body, which thou preparest to give my soul. But at the same time, the thoughts of thy

wonderful love in the midst of thy pains and sorrows, must yield my soul unspeakable delight: wherefore, while I am grieved with thy grief, I will feast myself in the pleasures and triumphs of thy love. I will partake of thy torments, and also of thy joys, which thy love did yield in the midst of thy agonies."

I shall add only one sacramental meditation more; which shews how his thoughts and time were usually employed after the Communion; being composed upon his return home from that heavenly feast.

"The glory of my God with his heavenly host, filled the place; God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, were all there, beholding and accepting their little flocks. The angels were pleased to take knowledge of these candidates for Heaven, that they might be acquainted with them, when they should arrive in their happy mansions. My Saviour impregnated the consecrated elements, and in a manner embodied himself there; yet still remaining where he was, filling heaven and earth, but more particularly our chancel, saying to us, and to me an undeserving guest; [You are all my friends, and worthy, whatever your sins be, through my sufferings.] I received my blessed Saviour into my heart, nay the whole Trinity; for the unity of the Father, and the power of the Spirit, accompanied the sacred action: but, O my soul, let not what is past content thee: thirst more and more after thy dear Lord, and give up thyself entirely to him; let there be no reserve: but in body, mind, and spirit, desire to be made a fit receptacle for him. And let all that belongs to thee,

be his ; in entire resignation of it to the will of God, and resolving to part with what is convenient, for the relief of his poor members.

“ How blessed an institution is this, O my adorable Saviour ! What could have been found out comparable to it to quicken us in holiness ! How does it actuate all our thoughts, and set all our powers awork ! How does it entertain our minds, and fill our souls ! Like the disciples going to Emmaus, our hearts burn within us, and are full of amazing wonder at thy rich mercy ! Before I come to thy holy table, trifles divert my mind, and engage my thoughts ; but when I come from thence, my heart is all joy and wonder ; all adoration and praise ; all sacrifice and resignation ; courage and resolution. How is my Saviour to be adored for this wise and gracious institution, who has provided so effectually for his faithful servants, to the world's end ! Be thou ever adored, O merciful Jesu, O my God, and my Lord ! For thy wonderful designs of love and mercy to the sons of men. Amen.”

From the preceding account of Mr. Bonnell's constancy and behaviour at the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the reader will of himself conclude, that

He was a religious observer of the Lord's Day.

he was a religious observer of the Lord's-day ; and such he was in a very strict manner, giving it entirely up to the service of God, and exercises of religion. He had private and family devotions suited to the day ; and all his dressing time he employed in repeating psalms, which had most relation to the

business of it, as the 84th, 116th, 118th, and 122d, and others, as his time allowed him.

He expressed a great dislike to the practice of some families, in making the Lord's-day a day of public feasting and entertainment; insomuch that most of their servants are deprived of the benefits of it, being to them, neither a day of rest nor devotion. To this purpose, I find the following remark of his upon David's refusing to drink the water of Bethlehem, which three of his mighty men had hazarded their lives to bring him, 2 Sam. xxiii. 17. "Is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives, therefore he would not drink it. Thou," says he to himself, "goest to church, and enjoyest the ordinance of God: thy servant stays at home to dress thee perishing food. How knowest thou but it is to the jeopardy of her eternal life? Fear to eat of that meat which costs so dear." This practice he remedied in his own family as much as he could, without turning the day entirely into a fast. He generally upon the Lord's-day, had no company but his own family; that so no reserves might hinder him from entertaining them with religious discourse. But if other company were with him, he would be talking to his servants about the sermon, and bring in some religious subject to be discoursed of; and if abroad, he used the same method, but with his usual modesty and caution.

The Lord's-day evenings he chose to spend alone, or in such company where religion might be the only entertainment. But the rarity of such company, made him at last resolve to visit none upon that

day but the sick, or the afflicted ; and to decline receiving visits as much as possible ; desiring to converse only with God and his own thoughts, till it was time to call his family together. Then he examined his servants, and instructed them in the great principles and duties of religion. Then he usually read to them some plain pious book for about an hour together ; then one or more chapters in the Bible, and so went to prayers ; concluding the day with his other devotions ; only large additions of prayers and praises proper to it. Thus did he answer, in his practice, the end of the institution of the Lord's-day, making it a truly Christian sabbath ; a day, not so much of rest as religion, and a happy type of that eternal sabbath which the saints enjoy in Heaven ; who rest for ever from their labours, yet are for ever employed in the work of thanksgiving and praise.

I shall here add his judgment of the necessity of observing the Lord's-day, and keeping it strictly holy.

“ The Lord blessed the seventh day, to the purposes of piety and spiritual benefit of his servants ; yea, and it shall be blessed. This is not a branch of the ceremonial law ; for from the beginning of the world, the Lord hath established a blessing upon the seventh day, making it a mark and characteristic of his servants from the rest of the world, who take no notice of a seventh day ; an outward sign of his everlasting covenant with them from the beginning to the end of the world. He hath sanctified a seventh part of our time to himself, and as he heretofore sanctified the Temple, as a type of our Emmanuel, of our Saviour's manhood ; and gave great privileges to the

prayers that were offered up to him in it, or towards it; so hath he sanctified every seventh day of our time, as a type of that eternal day of holiness, and of rest, which we shall enjoy in the presence and company of our Lord in Heaven. Fear not then, my soul, the day is blessed; whatever thou offerest up to thy God on this day, shall have a double acceptance; and whatever good thing thou desirest on this day, shall have a speedy answer. This is the acceptable time, in which God will hear thee; this is the Lord's own day which he hath blessed, and in which he will

Isa. lvi. 6.

bless thee. 'Only take heed, that thou keep the covenant of the Lord, and sanctify this his day.' (For most wise reasons he hath appointed it, as essential and necessary to the improvement of our souls. For whoso looks into the world, and sees how men are apt to be engaged to it, and forget their eternal home; will soon think, that one day in seven is as little as can be, to revive and maintain in their souls, a true sense of things.) 'Then will

Verse 7.

thy God bring thee to his holy mountain, and make thee joyful in his House of prayer; thy burnt-offerings and thy sacrifices shall be accepted on his holy altar.' Thy devotions, and thy services shall be accepted that day (more especially) in his sight, through the Mediator of the covenant, the Lord Jesus. Amen."

In another place he speaks to the same purpose.

"The Christian Church assumed the festivals of the Jews, as rightly belonging to them: for the things which they were kept in remembrance of, were fulfilled in our Saviour; and, therefore, the same festivals

were to be kept by Christians, in remembrance of this fulfilling. Thus the Passover was the type of our Saviour's suffering, and transferred to our Easter: the Feast of Tabernacles, to Christmas, in remembrance of God's having pitched his tabernacle among men. And so the Sabbath transferred from an outward to a spiritual rest, in remembrance of Christ's having perfected the work of our redemption, and our rest from sin procured thereby: so that we are not to look upon it as a Jewish, but a Christian festival; for to do otherwise, is blamed by the Apostle, and paralleled with setting up of circumcision.

"The Jews observed the Sabbath for a long time, only as a day of rest, and not of holy exercises. The Christians at first, did meet in the night of the Lord's-day because of privacy; and several of them were slaves, who could get no other time; in the morning, those that could went to their repose, the other to their labours.

"The laws of our Church and land, are not so strict in forbidding work, as requiring assembling to the worship of God. And for the rest of the day, we are particularly directed to acts of charity; and no doubt such innocent relaxation is lawful, as does not take us off from that serious temper of mind we ought to maintain.

"It seems impossible for men to be saved, without sanctifying one day in seven; I mean in the ordinary course of living. Less than this will not keep their minds above sin and the world. And then all visits and idle chat is to be avoided, and we ought to be altogether alone, or in company and conversation that

may edify, and we are to consider, that the Lord's-day is not only a remembrance of what is past, but a type of the eternal Sabbath in Heaven ; and, therefore, ought to be spent in such exercises (bating acts of charity and the necessities of our mortal state) as we hope to be employed in there."

He observed the
feasts and fasts
of the Church.

And as he kept the Lord's-day most strictly holy, so he was a religious observer of the feasts and fasts of the Church, giving them up to devotions proper to them, as much as his engagements in the world would allow ; to humiliation and repentance, if days of sorrow ; to praises, if days of joy. And what he thought of our festivals, and how he observed them, the two following meditations will shew.

St. Matthew's-
day, 1685.

" *Solibus æstivis non consule computat annum*, was the character of the happy man of old. But our happiness is of another sort, and our computation different. O happy soul ! when the offices of religion do measure out to thee the time and the year ; and devotion in its decent dress, is thy calendar ; when as thou dost receive with pleasure the fruits of each season, which the bounty of thy God causeth the earth to bring forth to thee ; the sun and heaven yielding successively their grateful changes, so thou mayest measure out thy time with suitable variety of praise and devotion ; aspiring in each season after some new grace in return, till thou hast run the circle of them all with the year, and summed up thy gain at last in a happy eternity. Happy soul ! to whom each new week is welcome, and known not by the almanac, or the outward face

of the year, but by the grace it proposes to thy meditation and practice in its Collect, while thou dost join with the whole Church, in making this theme thy study and thy care: when each month is known to thee, not by the old heathen name it bears, but the blessed saints it commemorates, welcoming with joy their holy festivals. O happy souls who unite in this blessed study! May my soul enter into your secrets, and dwell with you in this sacred exercise! May I ever rejoice in this orderly revolution of time, ever be with you, the children of the kingdom, the favourites of Heaven, the delights of my soul, and heirs of eternity, in all the happy periods of this revolution; and thus employed, through the mercies of our good God, may we roll insensibly on from grace to glory, from time to eternity, and from commemorating the saints here, to enjoying our Lord, and them for ever hereafter. Amen."

The other meditation I shall insert is upon the festival of our Saviour's Nativity, and those holy days which attend it.

"Lord, thou hast made this blessed festival seem to us, as the forty days after thy resurrection did to thy disciples; when every day thou didst present thyself to them, sometimes in one form, sometimes in another, now to this company, now to that; reviving their hearts by turns, and cheering them with thy gracious presence; and filling their souls with joy and comfort. So art thou now pleased to be continually, as it were, coming to and fro among us; sometimes visiting us in thy worship, sometimes in thy word, sometimes in thy sacraments, sometimes in this

assembly, sometimes in that; and in all places dost thou meet us at every turn: like a gracious master of a feast, that goes to and fro among his many guests, to see that all be served, all abound, and none want; ordering one while wine, another while music, another while choicer messes, and calling upon all to be welcome, and make good cheer. So graciously busy and kind hast thou been amongst us in this holy time. Dost thou not fulfil thy word, that 'Thy delight is with the children of men?' O let our delight be with thee, while thou art thus graciously pleased to be with us. Let us slip no opportunity of meeting thee, wherever thou art pleased to be present in thy holy ordinances. Find a way, good Lord, to present thyself to the souls of thy poor servants, who enjoy not these blessed opportunities at this time; who see nothing of the festivity of this happy season; break into their souls by the immediate working of thy Spirit, and let them rejoice with thee alone, since they cannot with the gladness of thy people. Let their inward joy be so much the greater, as they are deprived of means of outwardly expressing it."

It were easy to add many other of Mr. Bonnell's meditations upon our festivals, especially the greater festivals, set apart more immediately to commemorate our blessed Saviour: all which holy times he observed with a most religious care and zeal, his thoughts being wholly taken up in contemplating the several parts which our Lord acted upon earth, and are then particularly commemorated. But I must not let this work swell too much upon my hands, and shall, therefore, pass on to other instances of his piety.

He had very early resolved to keep fast-days, and to his last, continued a strict observer of the stated fasts of the Church; and hardly ever, in any period of life, was diverted by business, company, or care, from making Friday a day of humiliation, repentance, and religious sorrow.

A strict observer of the fasts of the Church.

He endeavoured to spend his fasting-days alone, and wholly to give them up to religious exercises and contemplations; his chief study being to affect his mind with the most tender sense of our Saviour's bitter sufferings; strictly to review and examine his life, and earnestly to bewail his smallest failings. His usual practice on Fridays was about noon to repeat the fifty-first Psalm kneeling, with several prayers taken out of the Communion Office, besides others of his own composing.

But his manner of observing fast-days, and what then principally employed his thoughts, the following meditation will shew.

“ ‘Behold in your fast-day you find pleasure.’ The exercise of a fast-day, is to consider our Saviour's sorrows, and our sins that caused them: to consider God's wrath provoked, and the universe disordered; and putting on mourning by them. All these are serious and afflicting considerations; but no man can admit of afflicting considerations, who has at the same time sentiments of pleasure. The nature of man is so framed, that his thoughts follow his sentiments. He must be in pain himself that can think of painful things; he must be sorrowful, that can frame an idea of sorrowful things. When any thing pleases us, we

are altogether indisposed to think of displeasing matters. Therefore it is, that God so much provides against, and excludes pleasure on our fast-days.

“O infinite love! O unmeasurable goodness! O eternal Son of God! Grant me grace, not to seek to please myself in a world in which my sins made thee a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and then suffer the most ignominious death.”

Having thus considered Mr. Bonnell's piety, with respect to the great duty of Prayer, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the Lord's-day, with the Feasts and Fasts of the Church; I shall now mention some other duties which he discharged with the same exactness and care.

Nothing gave him greater joy, than any proposal or endeavour to promote the honour and service of God, and suppress immorality and profaneness; and some of his most sensible afflictions proceeded from that coldness and indifferency he observed in most people, in the great concerns of religion and another world. He was one of those who mourned in secret for our public sins, and by his powerful prayers, contributed not a little to avert public judgments from us, or shorten their continuance. “Alas,” he would often say to his intimate and religious friends, “what will this turn to! where will it end! the true spirit of piety seems more and more wearing out of the world.”

Nor was this religious zeal for the honour of God, and sorrow for the reigning impieties of the world, only the effects of age, and more confirmed habits of piety. The following meditation composed in Lon-

don, in the twenty-seventh year of his age, will shew the contrary.

“ O my God ! for the contradiction of sinners, when will it have an end ! how long shall I live among those that are enemies to righteousness, to thee, thy word, my soul, and their own ! and yet I live in a land where thy religion is established and professed : thy death, O dear Jesu, granted and owned. My soul is weary of the blasphemies of Atheists, of the horrid oaths and imprecations of profane, and sly objections of malicious sinners. While we hope to be saved by thy death, why do we not all rejoice in it ; and alike believing it, alike make our discourse of it ? O that with one consent on thy day, the mouths of all the people of this land might be filled with thy praises and wonderful works ! that wheresoever we could go, we might pass but from one discourse of thee to another ; that it might be natural among us, from the greatest to the least, familiarly to converse of thee and thy laws ; and with one heart, and with one mouth, make mention of thy name ; and all join in owning the miraculous history of thy providence, and works of old ; and the life and death of our adorable Redeemer, in the fulness of time. But who may hope for this in the midst of our profaneness ! Is it not enough for me, to desire that there may be among us a select number of those who fear the Lord ? And, therefore, two things, Lord, I humbly crave ; let there never fail, in these lands, such an elect number, as have not bowed their knees to sin, nor bent their minds to Atheism and profaneness. And next, let it be thy blessed will to cast my lot among them, and make me one of that .

happy number; let me spend my days with them; and among them let my life end; and when I come abroad into the world, let their spirit follow and act in me, that I may continue uniformly the same man in all places. Let not the overflowing of ungodliness be able to extinguish my devotion, nor cause me to comply with, or approve of their wicked practices. In conclusion, O that all the people of these lands were the Lord's people; that thy will may be done by all upon earth as it is by all in Heaven! That wherever we come, we might find every heart filled with thy love, and every mouth with thy praise, especially on thy day! Accept, O Lord, of my unworthy prayers; and answer them so far as is good in thy sight; but vouchsafe to leave a blessing upon thy servant."

Is a great promoter of the religious societies.

The religious societies which began in Dublin about the year 1693, gave him great comfort and joy; he not only approved of that pious design, but did very much encourage and promote it. He pleaded their cause, writ letters in their defence, and was one of their most diligent and prudent directors. He considered very well the abuses, to which, by length of time, decay of zeal, and the neglects of those who are principally concerned to oversee and govern them, those societies might be liable; but he found they did present good, and that made him rejoice; and he used to argue, that the possibility of a thing being abused, is no reason to decline the use of it. He was likewise a zealous promoter of the societies for Reformation of Manners; who apply themselves to the suppressing of profaneness and vice; he was always present at

their meetings, laid their design truly to heart, and thought much of it ; he contributed liberally towards its necessary charge, and constantly prayed for their success. And all who wish well to them, or their cause, are sensible, how useful a friend they have lost by Mr. Bonnell's death ; though he, no doubt, enjoys the reward of his indefatigable zeal, in so glorious an undertaking.

Agreeable to his zeal for the religious societies, and all public undertakings which might serve the interests of piety, were his private endeavours to promote it in all he conversed with ; but he chiefly applied himself to young people, and took a particular pleasure in forming their tender minds to the love of God and religion ; he caught at all occasions of suggesting good thoughts to them ; and encouraged, directed, and even reproved them with such tenderness, concern, and address, as first to gain upon their affections himself, and then, so to improve the power he had with them, as to make them in love with their duty, to excite strong desires after holiness in their hearts, and to arm them with firm resolutions of adhering to it.

And as he industriously embraced all opportunities of gaining proselytes to piety, so he studied to make religion the subject of his constant conversation ; and talked of nothing else with pleasure. He had a peculiar art of engaging company upon such subjects ; and managed his part of such discourse with that modesty and prudence, that there appeared nothing of artifice or design ; nothing that aimed at magnify-

A great promoter of religious conversation.

ing himself, or raising his own character: but when he spake of religion, it was with a natural easiness, with calmness and humility; and he never soured such conversation with uncharitable reflections upon others, who either differed from him in opinion, or fell short of him in practice.

But his judgment of religious conversation, chiefly as to the manner of it, and with what modesty and caution he managed it himself, the following letter will sufficiently shew, written to a religious friend upon that subject.

St. Peter's day,
1693. "I think I cannot better employ this day, than in taking the leisure it affords me, to entertain myself with my dear fellow-servant of our great Master, in some such matters, as we should perhaps be talking of, if we were together: there is particularly one thing, that I have started in discourse, which I intended, when I got leisure, to speak of more at large in writing; and that was, about outward expressions of piety. I confess, as to myself, I have been always reserved in them; such I mean, as were easily imitable by persons of any sort; as lifting up the hands and eyes, godly words, and expressions of endearment concerning God. Since I have conversed with you, I have spoken more of these things than ever I did before; but I have complied with it only towards you. Now the case, I think, is this: it is our duty, on fit occasions, to declare ourselves publicly for God, and for the cause of his holy religion, when it may be for his glory, and the edification of others; and the engaging and riveting ourselves in his service, by setting the eyes of the world

upon us, and making them witnesses against us, if we swerve or falter from our professions. But then, this ought to be done by some solid, essential expressions of true piety, which none but those that are indeed truly pious can attain to; such as a gracious countenance, an humble mien, an unaffected modesty, and a cheerful and sincere frankness in declaring that we are the servants of God, and devoted to him; or speaking words drawn from the soul of piety, which amount to such a declaration as those of the Apostle; 'If any man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be accursed.' But then these words must not be borrowed from others, or even from Scripture itself, but originally our own; for any one may speak good sentences by rote. There are some expressions, that tend not so much to shew a devotedness to God, or resolutions or desires to serve him, as our nearness to him. These are carefully to be avoided; for they tend too much to heighten a good opinion of ourselves; are apt to move envy or censure; and may happen in some measure to deprive us of that nearness, by casting a little damp upon our consciences, and causing God to withdraw his favours; such are, accounts of transports and elevations that God gives us in his service; and very endearing expressions in mentioning of God; as, my dearest Lord, my sweet Jesus, my loving Father, instead of saying only God; which I have heard some persons use upon too ordinary occasions, when one could not well suppose that they had a present, lively sense and feeling at their heart, of what they spoke, answerable to the height of the words: for none can have a sense in their hearts,

adequate to such words as these, but it will put them into a transport, which will either express itself in a flood of tears, or in silence; and hinder them from readily going on with other talk. There are other expressions, which are the language of our hearts immediately to God himself: and it is ill to use ourselves to speak or write these, but when our hearts indeed go along with them, and have intercourse with God. But it is hard to suppose, when we use them too frequently, our hearts can always go along with them: and this gives matter of offence to good people, and is a prejudice to ourselves: for if we use to speak such words as ought to be spoke only to God himself, without speaking them indeed to him with our hearts, it will certainly indispose our hearts to speak to him in those words when we would. Because we shall get a way of speaking such things by rote, and not be able to discern, when indeed we speak to God, and when we do not.

“ My conversing with you, has put me upon speaking and writing more things of this sort than I did before, except in my closet, or in my private papers; in which I seldom allowed myself to use any expression but what proceeded immediately from my heart; or to say, my God, instead of God, unless my heart boiled with a fulness to express itself in those terms; so that I trust those papers are the transcript of my heart. But I cannot say so of all I have writ to you: indeed I cannot tax myself with any thing in particular to the contrary; but having writ so much, I have a fear upon me, that something may have been said rather to the occasion, than from the present sense

or feeling of my mind. Though I do not censure you for this language, believing it to proceed from your zeal, and the lively sense you have of God; yet this caution against it will not be amiss in the course of your life."

It were easy to add other instances of Mr. Bonnell's piety, and to enlarge upon these: but I must proceed to consider him with respect to the duties we owe to ourselves, and our neighbour, as well as those we owe to God.

As to the duties we owe to ourselves, I have shewed how he discharged some of them, by what I have said of his humility and meekness, mortification and self-denial. These being duties, which, in many instances of action, have an immediate reference to ourselves; as in others, they have to God and our neighbour. But the general duty which we are to perform to ourselves, and which comprehends all others under it, is a due regulation and government of our passions and affections; and none could keep a stricter watch over these than Mr. Bonnell did: he considered human nature with great application, and particularly, how our passions act within us, what feeds and inflames them; and how they are to be checked and subdued, made governable and calm. To this purpose he speaks in one place.

How he performed the duties we owe to ourselves.

"Passions of the mind, are like a running gout; it is the same morbid matter that shews itself sometimes in the knee, then in the elbow; that causes giddiness in the head, sickness in the stomach, and colics in the bowels: it is the same morbid matter

in the soul, (irregular passions, and unmortified affections) that shews itself sometimes in love, sometimes in aversion; then in envy, then in ambition; sometimes it is love of esteem, sometimes of beauty; sometimes of riches and grandeur, and abundance of like variety. Seldom above one of these is predominant at a time, and then the party is free from others; and all commonly is as the bodily temper varies. These come and go by fits unaccountably; but while the root of the matter lives in our hearts, we are still under the power of the disease; which we nourish by things that are pleasing; as we do the gout or scurvy, by meats that please our palate. We seldom contract or increase these distempers by eating of rhubarb or aloes; but by high sauces and delicious meats. We indulge our pleasing passions, and they bring us under the smart of the more painful ones. ‘Cease to desire,’ says Seneca, ‘and you will cease to fear. Who shall deliver us from the body of this death?’ Thy cross, O blessed Saviour, is a sufficient remedy to all: for who can allow themselves to love, or be overmuch pleased with their fellow-creatures, who stand under the shadow of this direful tree? Had not the blessed Virgin, and the beloved Disciple, something else to think of while they stood there, than gratifying their minds in worldly amours? ‘But we are not always to stand there; it is not required of us.’ Yes, while we are in this world, in which our Lord suffered, we are always to be there more or less; because we are always to be free from the slavery of those affections, from which he died to set us free: and to be most

there, when we find ourselves in most danger of being pleased. For if we keep ourselves from being pleased, God hath commanded nature to keep us from being displeased. If we mortify for his sake, those affections which are pleasing to us, he will certainly deliver us from those that only bring torment, 'And they that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts.'"

To the same purpose, in another place, he expresses himself thus :

"What a round do passions make in our miserable souls; we fight against a desultory enemy, which shifts and changes as often as we aggress it. As the humours of the body circulate about, so passions circulate with them. It is with us as with persons in a rheumatism, when the pain is in their shoulders, they prepare their applications; but before they can well apply them, the pain is moved down to their knees, and thence again to their hands. When we get free from lust, the humour settles in our heart, and turns to love; if we get respite from this, it flies into our head, and perplexes us with vanity, conceit of ourselves, and love of esteem of others. Perhaps thence it turns to pride and souring, with the mixture of other humours, becomes anger, peevishness, envy, revenge, or malice, till at last it comes back where it began. Thus while we seek to apply remedies to passion, the humour circulates, and the passion travels along with it, and starts up in a new place, and in a new guise.

"O Lord, who hast instructed us to strike at the root of all, by a true mortification of ourselves; help

me to watch the motions of this subtle enemy, and to declare war against it wherever it appears. Help me to give it no rest, as it gives me little. Strengthen my will, that it may be proof to its solicitations in every shape, faithful to thy love in all encounters, and victorious through thy grace under all oppositions.

“If I converse with politicians, and men of business, it makes me worldly; if with men of learning and wit, it makes me vain; if with fair persons, I am in danger of being sensual; if with great ones, of being proud. O my God, how many snares are scattered in all my ways? What need have I to take care of myself within, since it is impossible to prevent occasions of evil without? All these are the occasions of our warfare, but thou hast made thy grace sufficient for them all.”

There are many other meditations among his writings, of the nature and power of our passions, and the methods of governing them; which show, that he kept so severe an eye over them, that he not only conquered his greater corruptions, but pursued his lesser failings with a most active zeal, and being never satisfied with his present attainments in religion, went on continually from one degree of piety to another, till all ended at last in glory.

The consequence of his victory over his passions and desires, his humility, and meekness, and deadness to the world, was thorough contentment of mind with his fortune and estate. He had too just sentiments of this world, not to be above the sordid

Free from the sin of covetousness. sin of covetousness, which he knew only in notion; as I might prove from many

of his meditations against it, of which I shall insert only two, which are as follow.

“ ‘ Take heed and beware of covetousness : man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.’ Bread, the staff of life, will not sustain a man without God’s blessing ; much less will riches, which make themselves wings and fly away. Take heed, my soul, of saying, this gain, or that sum, will furnish thee with a competency, or subsistence. This is too like the foolish householder’s calculation, ‘ Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years.’ Consider that riches avail nothing in themselves, to procure the end men hope for by them, being so easily lost or blasted ; and that without a stock of these, God can make sufficient provision for thee from day to day : this thought will keep thee from being too intent on worldly advantages, and make thee more indifferent to gain, and by consequence, more disposed to charity.

“ Take heed of thinking to lay in for a siege against Providence, and to fence thyself against him by abundance of outward provision : rather throw down thy walls, and cast thyself naked on his mercy : and he will be thy more sure defence, he will be to thee instead of walls and bulwarks.

“ Observe thy good humours, take thyself in the fits of charity. Art thou disposed at any time to give largely ? Do it out of hand, lest the grace of God withdraws, and thou growest cool in thy good purposes. No man ever repented of his charity, though it might seem to have been in excess. Be it never so large, assure thyself thou wilt rejoice in

having done it; even at a time when thou hast not heart or grace enough to do it, were it then to do.

“And why shouldest thou desire possessions in this world? Sometimes thou art able to slight them, and sometimes thou forgettest thyself, and thinkest them fine things. Why shouldest thou have footing here? Look up to Heaven, see if that abode (to which thou hast a title, as to an inheritance, when for God's sake thou dost despise this earth,) be not more glorious than the most magnificent earthly structure. God hath not thought fit thou shouldest be born to these; why then shouldest thou fix thy heart upon them? God has made thee loose to the world; keep thyself so, and think his providence a better provision, than any fund of riches thou canst heap up or save.

“And then for posterity, remember, that notwithstanding Abraham's numerous progeny, ‘They are not all Israel, which are born of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children:’ but they are the true children of Abraham, who follow his faith; and such, even out of stones, were raised up to him. So that it is no matter for a worldly succession; we live by faith, not by sense: we speak the language, and have regard to the state of the other world. Lift up then my soul thine eyes to the everlasting hills: contemplate the state of the other world; and forget these transitory things below. Our conversation, our citizenship is in Heaven, let us mind the customs of our country, and not be conformed to the vain fashions of this world.

“And do thou, O God, who inspirest the hearts of

thy servants with grace to seek thee, and drawest them after thee, stay up my soul upon thyself: keep it above the world; let it converse with that heavenly country which thou hast revealed to it, and grow more and more acquainted with its blessed customs; that it may become a natural denizen of it, by breathing the air, speaking the language, and having all its faculties influenced by the spirit and genius of that happy seat. Let me with great unwillingness descend to the concerns of this world, lest I grow familiarized to it, and forget my own country; which yet is not mine, but as thou, my God, art pleased to make it so. Thou who hast adopted me into it, art only able to keep me a living member of it; let not my unworthiness make thee repent of the favour thou hast granted me; perfect thy own mercy, and let me not live but to glorify thy clemency: and that for the sake of the blessed King of those heavenly mansions; who being the life and light of the whole region, fills all the blessed inhabitants of it with joy, and peace, and love, and wonder, and never-ceasing praises; the Lamb who was slain for us, and purchased us with his blood, the Son of thy love, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

Here follows the other meditation upon the same argument.

"I have often dreamt to have found great riches, or. to have been in much trouble, when yet I have known myself to have been in a dream, and have said to myself, Though I hug these treasures never so much, I shall not be able to keep them, they will vanish before morning, and I shall awaken without

them. So also when I have been in fear and much trouble, I have said to myself, Come, let me strive to awaken out of this troublesome dream, and have awoke upon it; but then it has been a miserable delusion, and a grievous trouble; when I have thought all real, and have not known it to be a dream, then my sleep has been profound indeed.

“What is this world, O my soul, is it any more than a dream? Thou art happy when thou canst know it so, then thy senses are awake. But sadly art thou immersed in sense, when thou takest it for a reality, thy carnal slumber is then too profound. Are not our true senses as much oppressed with the clog of this body of sin, as our vital senses are by sleep? Can it be other than a dream, when we are subject to so many thousand delusions in our opinions of things, and to such frequent forgetfulness of our true awakened state in another world? Sin, O sin, is a profound sleep, and grace brings some degrees of awakedness, to let us know that here we are but in a dream, and see but duskishly and in part. The more sensual I am, the more wretchedly I sleep and forget myself, and all things but those deluding phantoms about me, which I take for realities. When I look about me, and see the fields adorned with flowers, and the trees with leaves, and fine houses built of lasting fabric, I pretend to reason, and say, are all these things nothing? It is true; they are something, but nothing to thee. Alas, what is one generation of men, or thy shorter span of life; God in his wisdom has provided these things for a proportionable end, even for many generations and series of inha-

bitants, which he has brought, and still designs to bring into the world. We have but a life in them; and that very short and uncertain; we must leave them to our successors, and be accountable for the use. They are things of durable continuance; and what proportion do they bear to thy moment of time which thou hast to spend among them? None at all, and so they are nothing to thee. They are not made for thee, but for many successions of mankind; thou art only to view them and pass away. But have I then no property nor inheritance any where? Yes, look up and thou shalt see thy portion among the saints; lift up thy eyes to Heaven, there is thy treasure laid up securely for thee, there is thy home, there thy being. Look down on this world, and know assuredly that it is but a dream at best; see if it has not all the properties of a dream: of all the riches which we hug, of all the pleasures we enjoy, we can carry no more out of it than from a dream; the good man knows this, and, therefore, despises them; the sinner is drowned in slumber, and, therefore, insatiably embraces them. And of all the evils we suffer, none can pursue us out of this world; we shall awaken in our rosy bed of blissful security and rest, and find all the dreadful phantoms vanish with our mortal sleep. The good man knows this, and regards them not; ignorance oppresses the sinner, and, therefore, he lives in perpetual terror, and is overwhelmed with trouble; 'O lift up thine eyes to the hills, from whence cometh thy help;' look up to the top of the rock, and behold thy bed of rest: long to awaken there, and be present with thy God, that the night

may pass away, and the day of eternal happiness shine upon thee. This is not thy home, nor can all the malice of devils (those rulers of darkness, and domineering tyrants of the night) keep thee here long among their terrors, and more dangerous allurements.

“ Keep thyself awake, O my soul, in this thy dream ; dare to look up to Heaven, and say, There is my inheritance, my treasure, my home. Let neither terrors fright thee, nor allurements charm thee, to think this world any thing, or forget thy native country. O my dear God, let down a ray of heavenly light, a beam of thy divine glory, and enlighten the dark corners of my heart, that with patience and forbearance I may spend the remainder of this mortal dream ; and though seeing thee but as in a glass and darkly, I may never forget my condition, or look upon this world as more than it is, (at least my share and span in it) till shadows depart, and the light of glory arise full upon me ; that so with full awakedness I may see thee whom my soul loveth, even as thou art. And in the mean time, may think nothing too much to do, too hard to suffer, or too dear to part with for thy sake, and the hopes of thy love in my dear Saviour. Amen.”

Thus did he arm himself against all covetous suggestions, by proper arguments and devout prayers ; and both had their due effect ; for he was entirely satisfied with his condition, and ever firmly relied upon Providence for his support : and not only was he content with his own state, but that of others also ; unless of the poor and necessitous, whom he studied to comfort and relieve. But the sin of envy found

no room in his soul; and those who knew him best can witness, how far he was from betraying any discontent at the prosperous condition of others; at their increasing in fortune, honour, or fame. For he knew that the only happy, were the religious and the good: and their graces were the subject of his praises, but never the occasions of his envy.

In the duties of temperance and chastity, he was nicely strict, and religiously severe, and kept the opposite vices at the greatest distance. He employed his time too usefully at home, to allow any of it to those places, which are the usual scenes of intemperance and folly. He considered that abstinence was one of the most effectual instruments of divine grace, to restrain and subdue our passions and desires; and that it ought to be a Christian's great study and care, to govern and calm, not exasperate and inflame them. His conversation was nicely pure and modest, and never sullied with an expression which could raise a foolish thought; but all was transacted according to the severest rules of decency and religion.

His temperance
and purity.

But that we may have as full and right a view of Mr. Bonnell as I can give, I shall now consider him with respect to others, and shew what an example he was, in the great duties of justice and charity, and other social virtues. For it is the property of true religion, not only to make us pious towards God, sober and temperate ourselves, but useful to the world. It secures our hands from violence and blood; our tongues from falsehood and slander; and our hearts from

How he performed
the duties we owe
to our neighbours.

fraud and cruelty ; it renders us faithful in every trust ; firm to every promise ; sincere in all our professions ; peaceable in our stations ; charitable to the needy, and the most valuable members of society. Without these happy effects of religion, it is superstitious and false, hypocritical and vain. But Mr. Bonnell's piety, when examined by this, or any other test, will appear to be true, genuine, and sincere.

His justice and integrity.

None could be more exact in every part of justice. He had many opportunities of improving his fortune, and met with temptations, which few, but himself, would have resisted. But though he dispatched all, who had business with him, in the most obliging manner, and with great readiness ; yet he never knew what gratuity or reward meant ; confining his gains entirely to his salary, and never allowing the importunity or gratitude of any, to force pecuniary acknowledgments upon him. And when at one time, three pieces of broad gold, and a guinea or two at another, were left upon his table, by persons whom he had highly obliged ; he gave the money all away, among those who had formerly been officers in the Custom-House, and were then in want ; and acquainted his friends with his reasons for being so scrupulous. " He owned he had done services to many, in getting their business dispatched, which strictly deserved considerable rewards ; but should he allow himself to take them, he did not know how far such a practice might prove a snare to him ; might tempt him to be unfaithful in his office, and bias him from his duty : and that, therefore, the surest way to be protected from

all bribery, was to keep it at a distance ; and never allow himself to take any thing, but just what the king allowed him ; lest any approaches to that sin, however covered with specious pretences, might give an advantage to Satan, to betray him into it. And he told his friends farther, that the reason of this declaration was, that his principle might be in some measure known ; that so he might be better armed against gifts and presents ; and neither tempted to accept, nor put to the trouble of denying them."

These were his principles and practices, built upon the solid foundations of justice and piety, and that noble faith which overcometh the world. None ever complained who had business with him, that money was necessary to procure dispatch, or that difficulties were imposed upon them, which presents (another name for bribes) removed.

How different was his behaviour from that which is complained of as too common in the world, and how few are proof against temptations, which he not only conquered, but despised ? Were all who are employed in offices of trust, actuated by his fidelity, contempt of unlawful gain, we should not hear so many complaints as we do, of the public being defrauded ; just and honest causes would not miscarry through the poverty, nor unjust ones succeed through the wealth and power of those who maintain them ; but justice would flow in regular channels, and be equally dispersed to the poor and rich.

And so well was Mr. Bonnell's character for justice and integrity established, that the fortunes of orphans, were fre-

Orphans frequently committed to him.

quently committed to his management and care : a trust which he never declined, and always discharged with a most conscientious tenderness ; which is a great instance of his charity, as well as justice.

Nor was his justice to men's fortunes, stricter than to their character and fame. He rarely touched so nice a thing as reputation ; and did it always with a Christian temper, and tender hand. But nothing like detraction was observed in his freest conversation. He excused men's failings, as far as was reconcileable with Christian prudence and sincerity ; and put the best comment upon every action it could bear ; and what he could not justify, he would pass lightly over. Not but that he was above that ridiculous complaisance of applauding every person, and every action, how worthless soever the one or the other might be : he was blessed with too discerning a genius for such good-natured folly. Yet, on the other hand, none made greater allowances for human nature ; for the various tempers and educations of men ; and he was seldom so severe on any as himself. His conversation was not soured with constant and melancholy complaints of the impieties of the age, and railing at those freedoms of life, which, though he did not practise himself, yet he would not condemn as crimes, in those who used them. And as this is a temper very excellent in itself ; since it proceeds from that charity, which hopeth, believeth, and endureth all things ; so it is the more to be valued, because the want of it has been complained of, in men of very strict lives : some religious severities, perhaps disposing men to melancholy, and hard thoughts of

those who do not deny themselves every liberty they have a dislike to. But with Mr. Bonnell, it was quite otherwise; he rejoiced when he could speak well of any: and when he was forced to discommend, it was always done with concern and regret.

Equal to his justice was his charity, which, like that of Heaven, rejoiced in doing good to all. He had a true concern for the souls of men: he contemplated so constantly, the amazing love of our Saviour to mankind, with his bitter sufferings to redeem their souls; that he was actuated with some degree of his infinite love, and burned with his heavenly flame. No man in his station, could take more pains, to give all he conversed with a true relish of piety and religion. He was continually dispersing good books among young people, his clerks, and servants, and poor families; which he seconded with such constant instructions, upon all fitting occasions, delivered with such kindness and concern, as could not fail of making great impressions upon many of them.

The same divine charity to the souls of men shewed itself, in his great and constant endeavours to direct and comfort those, who laboured under troubles and discontents of mind. He had a very happy way of calming uneasy thoughts, and quieting disturbed consciences. And in no work did he employ himself with greater readiness or success. For some years, his spare hours, especially upon the Lord's-day, were very much given to the scrupulous and disconsolate; with whom what he said had very great weight; not only because he de-

His charity.

To men's
souls.

To the afflicted.

livered himself with great clearness and judgment; but also because they were always willing to be convinced and persuaded by him, from the opinion they had of his sincerity and kindness; for he treated afflicted persons with great tenderness and compassion. He first felt their pains, before he attempted their cure; and wept with them, that with him they might afterwards rejoice. And the same charity often engaged him, in composing quarrels and disputes among relations and friends. Most who knew him, desired his assistance in those cases, often leaving their differences to his determination alone: the most opposite interests and tempers agreeing in this, that there could be no partial proceedings where he was concerned.

His management
of the duty of re-
proof.

His management of the duty of reproof, is another instance of his charity to men's souls. He hardly ever omitted to reprove, where he saw it necessary; which shews, considering how hard a duty reproof is, especially to one of his great modesty, that a zeal for God had gained the entire ascendant of his soul, and conquered even his natural temper. But as he seldom neglected to reprove, when it was fit for him to do it; so he had a peculiar happiness in the way and manner of reproofing: he did it in such a prudent obliging way, as to gain more friends by his reproofs, than many do by their flatteries: his rebukes were always delivered with that address and concern, that force of argument and persuasive eloquence, as he seldom failed of making the man his convert, but was sure of his friendship and esteem. And I have been assured by his friends, particularly a great man, who

had a long and intimate acquaintance with him ; that they have wondered to see passionate and proud men endure such home and cutting reproaches ; delivered with such plainness from him, without the least return of resentment : and that his method of reproving was so particular and uncommon, that it is impossible for any, who did not see it often, and the strange effects it produced, to have any just notion of it. Such force there is in prudent and well managed zeal ; so different, both in value and success, from the insolent reproofs of the violent and haughty ; which only expose such foolish reformers, and harden sinners in their crimes.

But his charity was not so entirely confined to men's souls, as to neglect their bodies ; great was his concern for both : and by his bounty to the one, he often made way for success to his charitable endeavours on the other. By the exactest computation his most intimate friends, who were best acquainted both with his fortune and charity, could make, he gave away the eighth part of his yearly income to the poor. And some years, when objects were numerous, he saved nothing at all. His private papers sufficiently shew, what a Christian feeling he had of the sufferings and necessities of the poor ; and there are several meditations in them, to move us to compassionate and relieve them. And in one place he prays for charity in this manner : " Give me faith, that will make me dare to be charitable, without fear of wanting myself, by what I lend or give away : that will make me freely commit all my worldly concerns to God, and trust him with

His charity
to the poor.

my fortune, my reputation, and life itself: that so I may see myself his care; and under the conduct of his providence, ordering and over-ruling my whole life, and every circumstance of it."

He never heard of any in want, but he generously relieved them; and frequently desired his friends to find out for him poor housekeepers, and such as were ashamed to beg; for such he esteemed the fittest objects of his charity. And to several he gave yearly pensions; that they might not only be comforted with present relief, but the prospect of future supply: and left instructions in his will for the continuance of those pensions; and ordered a considerable sum of money to be laid out in charity for ever.

Nay, his bounty to the poor was so great, and built on such right principles, that neither his being of a sickly constitution, and consequently needing more to support him than if he had been healthy, nor yet the apprehensions of losing his employment in the late king James's reign, were the least restraints upon his charity, as may appear by the following meditation, written in the year 1688, and during a fit of sickness.

"My God, I am unworthy of the least of all thy mercies, much more of these comfortable conveniences which thy fatherly tenderness provides for my repose, while thou thinkest fit to lay thy hand upon me. How dost thou afflict us in measure? Shall then the consideration of my sickliness, that I cannot shift so well, nor live on so little as I might do if I were well, discourage me from imparting of what I now have, to those that need it, (though I have reason

to fear the loss of all I have,) when I see how tender thy goodness and care is in providing for me according to the condition thou puttest me in; and that thou dost not lay on us many troubles, nor at any time more than we are able to bear: it shall not hinder me, O Lord, by the aid of thy grace; but as I have freely received, so will I freely give; and do thou deal with me as seemeth good to thee. Amen."

But so great, so generous was Mr. Bon-
 nell's charity, as to extend even to injuries His charity
to enemies.
 and enemies; insomuch that, I believe, few ever more fully obeyed the command, or imitated the example of our Lord, in loving his enemies, and praying for his persecutors. When he heard that any had spoken reflectingly of him, he was hardly ever known to resent it. And though human nature is hardly ever more provoked, than by injurious or reproachful words; yet so much had grace with him got the mastery of nature, that the use he made of slanders and reflections, was, to examine himself, "If he had never been guilty of detraction towards others; or at least heard them censured, without striving to justify them: if he had, then he hoped what he then suffered, was all the punishment God designed him for it: if so, he cheerfully embraced it."

And when, immediately after the late Revolution, an attempt was made to deprive him of his employment; a gentleman having made great interest for it; and when things were brought to that pass, that both he and his friends looked upon the employment as lost; yet he was rarely known to speak an angry word against his supplanter. And when others, who

were concerned for Mr. Bonnell, would express themselves with some heat against that gentleman; he commonly pleaded for him, and said every thing that could be offered in his favour. Those designs indeed miscarried, but Mr. Bonnell's charity was still the same. And how little such an attempt discomposed him, the following meditation, composed upon that particular occasion, will shew.

“O my God, I have often solemnly offered up to thee my place; thou now takest me at my word: ought I not to rejoice and be satisfied, that thou acceptest of any thing from me? For me now to be any way troubled or repine at it, would be a childish act between man and man; much more, sinful, between a creature and its God. I bless thee for the entire readiness which thou hast put into me heretofore to offer it up to thee: for this gives me now the greatest comfort, in thy taking it from me.

“How happy am I, in having disengaged myself from the world before this difficulty! How gracious has my God been to me, in having led me to it by the hand: that I might be light and free from all incumbrances, to follow his blessed will without uneasiness! I thought to have past out of the world, into a nearer attendance on thy service, with ease, joy, and triumph. Thy wisdom hath over-ruled my foolish measures: thou hast thought fit, that this change should not be without some hardship. But should I think worse of it for that? Are not the greatest things brought about by conflicts? To silence all the rest, was not the redemption of the world brought about by the bitter agony of thy dear Son? Shall I be afraid to

follow his steps, or think it less leads to a glorious issue, because thou leadest me to it through trouble?"

And what pains he took to arm himself with this divine charity to enemies, and what his thoughts of injuries and resentments were, the two following meditations will convince us.

"O my God, I am thy creature; and if I
may have leave to say, Thou art my God; all
is well, and I am happy. Two things I have always
dreaded, disgrace and enemies; lest I should not be
able to bear the one, or forgive the other. How great
is thy goodness to me, in lessening the dread of both!
He is happy, not who enjoys ease, but who can bear
uneasiness. A bishop of general esteem and repute,
who could bear being whipt in the public streets, on
an unjust accusation, and not lose his countenance,
would be the happiest man alive. For if such a thing
were done, we must suppose the higher powers to be
set against him; and the faction so strong, that none
dared to pity him, or appear for him: but though he
were faultless, yet all should look upon him as cri-
minal enough, in being the object of the government's
displeasure. A prophet among the Jews was as vena-
ble as a bishop can be among us; especially such
as our blessed Saviour, who went about
as of whom the people cried out, Never
as he did; and who, by the fulness of his
with shined with the glory of the Son of
figure a greater ignominy, than for him
? We know how reproachful that is
but we know not how much more so

it was among them, since it was the punishment of slaves, of which we have none. He bore scourgings and reproaches without murmurs and complaints; and his grace can produce the same effects in me.

“As to enemies; he is a great man who can speak to them with indifference, without disturbance or change of countenance: not from a court dissimulation, but from a consideration that these are more immediate instruments (perhaps than our friends) of good to us; and that God is nearer behind these, when we converse with them, than behind many of our friends. God’s presence is said to be, where he most manifests himself: now he manifests himself more certainly in his corrections, than in his favours.”

The other meditation is as follows:

“How easy is it for a child of God, that has his portion and inheritance in heaven, to pray for his enemies? For he saith, this person injures me in those things that are in no esteem with me: he injures me in trifles, and things of no value: but even of these trifles, he endangers the eternal ruin of his soul. And shall I not pity him for this; and beseech my God to pity his folly; and save him from those things which are nothing to me, but may prove infinitely prejudicial to him? ‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,’ says our Saviour. They knew that they took away the life of an innocent man: they took away his reputation, his comfort, and his ease: but besides that, they crucified the Lord of Glory; they knew not that they ruined themselves in those things that were little valued by him. ‘They think to be

revenged on me, and to do me a great injury: but, Father, forgive them, for they know not that they do no injury to me, but all injuries to themselves.' ”

I shall add only one instance more of Mr. Bonnell's charity, which falls in naturally after what went before; and that is, his charity to those of different persuasions in religion. He thoroughly considered the education and capacities of men, their various ways of thinking and expressing their thoughts, and judged it unreasonable that all mankind should be obliged to think and speak just as we do. Though no man was firmer to the Protestant religion established among us, and more truly zealous to support and enlarge it; yet force and violence he esteemed the unfittest means in the world to attain that end. And he utterly condemned all persecutions for religion, and violence to men's consciences. Thus in one place, after considering the many wars and revolutions, which almost every forty years have happened in Ireland; he assigns this as one reason of these fatal confusions; that we are a mixed people, of different nations and religions, and have very little love or regard for one another; and thus concludes.

His charity to those who differed from him in religion.

“There is no way possible to prevent the forty years' periodical revolution of commotions in this country, but by making all in it one people, and of one religion. How shall this be? By force? God forbid! This is a sieve that winnows out the good, and saves only the bad; because the good will be destroyed by it, and the bad only brought over. It is a pretty device for lazy Christians to make use of, to

convert the world : such as care not to be at the pains of good living, or pious preaching, set the temporal power, and rude soldiers on work, to bring over people to their folds, that they may enjoy the glory of having greater numbers : or being men altogether worldly-minded, and of secular designs, they desire greater numbers on their side, to strengthen their worldly interest, and secure their cause and party."

His charity was so generous and noble, that it effectually secured him from all narrowness of temper, and moroseness of behaviour towards those who differed from him in opinion. He used frequently to say, that most differences among Christians were chiefly in words ; and that their sentiments were much nearer than their expressions : and he had always instances at hand to prove this : and compared the quarrels of parties among Christians, to engagements that happen in armies ; when they fall foul on their friends, thinking that they are enemies : but the animosity ceases when the discovery is made ; which shall be the happiness of good men in heaven, whatever heats and mistakes may be among them here. And what charitable thoughts he had of good men, though of different persuasions, will appear from what follows.

" Were the circulation of the blood as much disputable in physic, as purgatory, transubstantiation, and many other things are in divinity ; and did some doctors build their practice upon the stagnation of the blood, and others upon the circulating of it : would not each side of these cry down the practice of the other, as founded upon a mortal error ; (since both

sides of a contradiction can never be true) and by consequence, that they who take the wrong side must needs murder the bodies of men? On the contrary, we should find them both upon the matter equally successful in their practice; because the force of physic depends not so much upon speculation, and hypotheses, as observation and practice. In like manner, in divinity, it is easy for men to give plausible arguments for any thing, and which they themselves will call demonstration; and to assert that the erring side, or the side that differs from them, must needs ruin the souls of men. Whereas we find that error has not so great an influence upon people's lives, as they would make us believe; but that upon the matter, these differing parties are equally successful in the practice of piety: (that is to say, there are good men of all parties in the Christian Church, except such as deny the very fundamentals of religion) Churchmen and Dissenters, Arminians and Calvinists, have all produced very pious men; and that, because the regulating men's lives and actions does not depend so much upon their understandings, as upon their wills and affections; not so much on speculation, as on exercise and practice. God knows how to excuse these errors of our judgment, provided we keep a good conscience, and take care to follow it."

The divisions which prevail among Christians he heartily bewailed: he saw how much of passion and worldly interest there was in them; and how destructive they are to piety and charity. But then he considered, that charity obliged him to look upon all

Christians as his brethren ; as children of the same father, and members of the same family to which he belonged ; and consequently that he must not hate nor persecute any of them : that he ought to lament their divisions, and do all that in him lay, to heal their breaches, and cure their animosities ; but still they had a right to his charity, and to his prayers.

But Mr. Bonnell always expresses his own sense in the fittest words, and in the clearest manner. And this being a matter of great moment, it is to be hoped that the judgment of one so eminent for piety and charity, will have its just weight with every considering reader.

“ Christian religion,” says he, “ is but one : the belief of one Trinity in Unity, and the redemption of the world, by the incarnation and passion of the Lord Jesus Christ ; and a life answerable to this belief. This is the ground and substance of it. But because God has thought fit, for the humbling of men, to leave their minds subject to error, (the error of the judgment not being sin, but of the will,) there have arisen several differences among the professors of this one religion ; each endeavouring what they can (as is natural to men, fond of their own productions) to raise the merit of their differences ; and to pretend them to be of more essentialness, and weight in religion, than indeed they are. Evil-minded and politic men, knowing the eagerness of mankind in points of religion, whet on this zeal to promote their worldly designs. The matter spreading, and many being engaged in it, who have no religion at all, cry up these differences as the tests and soul of religion. Thus

the world runs into factions, and good men silently wonder and grieve. They are sensible that none of all these differences are religion ; and that the zeal of abetting them, is nothing else but worldly faction ; that pious men may abound in their own sense, and may differ from others in matters of judgment, (which are not inconsistent with the above-mentioned substance of religion,) while with modesty, humility, and submission, they keep them to themselves. Thus all professors of this one religion may unite ; and all true ones do unite in the bond of charity. But those that insist on those differences, with such zeal as they should do on the substance, have either no religion, or almost none at all. Hence it is we so often hear ; ‘ Of what religion are you ? ’ as if there were several religions in the Christian world. In some, the question ought not to be, ‘ Of what religion ? ’ But, ‘ Of what faction ? ’ They that run their differences high, and insist on them more than on the substance, in which all true Christians agree ; let them pretend what they will, are not religious, but factious ; that is, have not spiritual, but worldly designs to serve ; worldly passions to gratify.”

In another place, upon the same subject, he expresses himself as follows :

“ There has been no age of the Church, in which the devil has not found means to bring in some matter of division ; taking occasion by men’s imperfect judgments, corrupt humours, factiousness, irreligiousness, and worldly designs. And in every age, the division on foot seems weighty, and of great importance, however slight it be in itself. And the reason is, because

this world is interwoven with it ; worldly profits, advantages, and honours, and men's heats and animosities arising from thence.

“ But when these are ceased, and after ages come to consider the differences in cold blood, and freedom from those secular things that accompanied them in the times when they were on foot ; they cannot but admire at the madness of men ; and wonder what it was should put them into such heats about such trifles. The reason plainly is, that worldly designing men, knowing that nothing animates men's zeal so much, as what relates to religion, carry on their designs under notions of it : for instance : if those about the governing part of a state, have a mind to make more room for their friends, by excluding others from favour : or, on the other hand, if men have ambition to make themselves popular, and any difference be sowed by the devil (who is the sower of tares) among the people, both these parties shall espouse the opposite part of this difference ; and endeavour to run down their adversaries until the matter run so high in the notion of the vulgar, as if heaven and damnation depended on it. Heretofore the Church communicated infants, as thinking it necessary to salvation ; now it doth not : would it not be a sad thing that blood should be drawn in this controversy on either side ? And yet how often is it done upon much less ? How high did the Predestinarian and Arminian controversy run but lately ? And yet how slight does it seem now ? And how very idle that men should fall out about what none of them understand.”

And what Mr. Bonnell's principle and practice

were with respect to the divisions of the church ; we may learn from what in another place he says upon that argument ; and which still more fully proves the greatness of his charity.

“ A wise and good man, whose lot should be to dwell in a place, where the people were all banded against one another in several factions, being families all proceeding from one stock, and all allied to him ; would make it his business to carry himself as indifferently between them as he could ; heartily grieving at their breach of friendship, and pitying their animosities : but being all his relations, he would, wherever he came, endeavour to sow peace among the differing parties ; he would espouse none of their interests, nor engage in any of their quarrels. But if he heard that branch of the family, which was nearly related to him, with whom he lived, and who, in his opinion, had the justest cause, and most right on their side : if he heard that, I say, villified and unjustly reproached, he would generously interpose, and offer some inoffensive apologies, perhaps with fit reprehensions to the aggressors. The church of Christ is one body, but miserably broken into several factions, springing from different causes, according to the different passions or interests of men. A wise and sober Christian reckons himself truly allied to all, pities and grieves at their unhappy differences, and is very unwilling to make himself a party in their quarrels, which worldly and ill-minded men on each side have raised, or at least fomented. He carries himself indifferently among them, and as one unconcerned in their childish disputes. But if the

interest and honour of that church, whereof he was born, and lives a member, be nearly concerned ; he interposes with the gravity and authority of a father : he reprehends and vindicates, as one above the contention, and not as a party but a judge."

I shall conclude this head of his charity, with his own description of it : and never any knew it better, or practised it more.

" Oh ! what is this excellent gift of charity ; without which, whosoever liveth, is counted dead before thee ; or even giveth his body in martyrdom for thee, gains nothing ? It is even the whole ornament of a Christian mind ; the complex of spiritual graces : it is to be meek under injuries, and tenderly compassionate to the miserable. It is to rejoice in the good of all men, and have a mean opinion of ourselves, our own abilities and deserts. It is to hate no man ; to treat none outrageously or bitterly. It is to be more concerned for the good of others, than our own praise ; never to be transported in an undue measure ; never to be captious, nor apt to take any thing amiss ; to mourn for every thing that is sin, and take exceeding pleasure in the good that any do ; to be difficult in entertaining bad reports, and forward in believing good ; unwilling to despair of any, and to undervalue our own pains to procure their benefit.

" This is to have the same mind which was in our blessed Saviour, and resemble him, as a child resembles his parent. In such he is pleased, is satisfied, and comforted, over all the troubles he has undergone for our sakes. These only can be pleasing

to him, and thought worthy by him to bear his name. Whatever other good is done, (if any can be, without this temper) is never owned nor accepted by him. Dear Jesus, let me think on this lesson, till thou hast graciously taught it my soul; that I may have the honour to be like thee, whom I own for the joy of my heart, and the delight and support of my life. Amen."

One in whom the preceding virtues so eminently shined, must be very well qualified to discharge all the duties of friendship. And this we may justly reckon one of Mr. Bonnell's excellences; that he was a most sincere, faithful, and zealous friend; had all those qualities which could render his friendship desirable; firmness and resolution, sincerity and openness, prudence and candour, generosity and love. He declined no trouble nor hazards to serve his friends. He assisted, he advised them in all their difficulties and doubts, and constantly prayed for them. And he had one property of a true friend, very rarely to be met with, (because true friendship is so) which was, always to deal plainly with his friends, and tell them what he disliked in their conduct: but this he did not in a haughty imperious way, but with the prudent endearments and tenderness, as well as sincerity of a friend; in such a manner, as by his reproofs to oblige them, and fix them faster to his friendship.

Is a most zealous and faithful friend.

He was not long in this kingdom before his friendship was very much coveted; and still as he became more known, it was desired the more. He was inti-

mately acquainted with many of our bishops; but his chief friends among them were, Doctor Dopping, late Lord Bishop of Meath; and Doctor Foley, late Lord Bishop of Down and Connor, who made Mr. Bonnell one of his executors: the deaths of these eminent prelates he truly lamented, but much more for the church's sake than his own. Such were likewise Doctor Wetenhall, the present Lord Bishop of Kilmore and Ardagh; and Doctor King, Lord Bishop of Derry: their Lordships maintained a constant and most intimate correspondence with him: they consulted him in most of their affairs, and paid a very great deference to his judgment; and still speak of his virtues with a particular pleasure.

Among the gentry, his friendship was courted by most, who were so happy as to have any opportunity of doing it, and had a right relish of learning or piety: but with some he contracted a great intimacy; particularly the Honourable Sir Robert King*, Baronet; who has a particular veneration for Mr. Bonnell's memory, speaks of him with the greatest delight, and ever since his death has expressed longing desires of seeing his life published. To whom I shall only add, John Bulkley, and John Reading, Esquires, late of the city of Dublin; who, as with Mr. Bonnell, they were comely in their lives, so in their deaths they were very little divided; it having pleased God to take them both to himself in a short time after Mr. Bonnell: so that, in less than three months, the city of Dublin was deprived of three gentlemen, who were eminent patterns of piety and goodness.

* Since
dead.

King*, Baronet; who has a particular veneration for Mr. Bonnell's memory, speaks of him with the greatest delight, and ever since his death has expressed longing desires of seeing his life published.

Many of the physicians of Dublin were likewise his intimate friends, which they would never have been, had they not been as eminent for their piety as their abilities in their own profession: and his acquaintance was desired, and friendship courted, by the most considerable of the clergy for piety and learning; several of whom advised with him in their difficulties and doubts; particularly where any man's conscience was concerned: and always paid a great regard to his judgment.

And, indeed, so well was the character of his excellences confirmed among us; so generally was he known, esteemed, and loved in Ireland; so inoffensive was his life, so free from censure or blame; that I believe no private man was ever more lamented. All professions joined in testifying their concern at his death. It was looked upon as a general loss; and many who had never personally known him, bewailed it.

If we consider Mr. Bonnell with respect to his several relations, we shall find him an excellent pattern in every duty arising from them. As he had been blessed with religious parents, so he ever acknowledged his obligations to their pious care. They began betimes to form his mind to religion: and as their endeavours were so blessed from above, that they made him a sincere servant to God; so of consequence, a dutiful son to themselves. Thus, in one place, he speaks of his parents, some years before his marriage.

His behaviour
to his several
relations.

Parents.

“ My chiefest benefactress on earth, is my mother ;

she hath brought me up in the way to Heaven : and blessed be the memory of my father, which hath influenced my life. I have no children to bequeath these blessings to, let them descend upon all the faithful children of Abraham; and diffuse themselves the more, for not being confined to a single line, till after many descents, they shall come at last to meet themselves at the great day of Jubilee. O all ye that love God, this is my legacy! The blessing descended on me from my father and mother, I leave among you."

Governors. If we consider Mr. Bonnell either as a son of the church, or a subject of the state; he had all those qualities, which, were they universal, would render our church and country flourishing and happy. He pursued no private designs, had no ambition to gratify, fell in with none of our parties: and was not only free from faction, but all suspicion of it. He offered up his daily prayers for all our governors, both spiritual and temporal; and was very rarely known to condemn their actions, or censure their very faults. And in all cases of difficulty and doubt, with relation to government, he still begged direction from above, "That his mind might be enlightened, and his conscience guided by the divine Spirit; and that God would instruct him, and all his true servants, to judge righteous judgment."

Wife. If we consider him as a husband, no man ever expressed more tenderness and real love. He ever found some new way to shew his kindness, some peculiar methods of obliging. In every illness

of his wife's, he sensibly suffered with her; and whenever in his sickness she gave him any assistance, he always made fresh and kind acknowledgments of her care; and what was more, he instructed, he assisted her for Heaven, calling daily upon her to join in prayers and praises to God with him.

His servants he treated with the same civility, as if they had served him out of good Servants. will, and not for maintenance and reward. And when they were sick, he behaved himself to them, rather as a father, than a master; omitting no expence nor care which were necessary for their recovery; and not only providing for their bodies, both in health and sickness, but being a faithful instructor and monitor to their souls. And those who had been his parents' servants, or attended him in his childhood, and at school, were ever after the objects of his charitable kindness: he supported them when in want, and took care of their children when they could do nothing for them.

In a word, all his friends and relations, all who desired, or any way needed his help, he studied to assist and relieve; treating them with the most obliging civility; comforting them when in affliction or trouble; reproving them when in sin; and supplying them when in want: and all this, without any other view or design, than the conscientious discharge of his own duty; and that by all the services he was able to do them, he might engage them in the service of his great Master, and make them his fellow-candidates for Heaven.

I have thus given a faithful, though imperfect re-

presentation of Mr. Bonnell's virtues; and am persuaded, that the picture bears some resemblance to its original, whatever its particular defects may be; which are the fewer, that so much of it is the work of his own masterly hand. And no doubt the whole will sufficiently convince us, that his piety and goodness were of a strain very rarely to be met with; and that the more we make him our rule and pattern, both in religious and civil life, the nearer we shall come to perfection.

And now to give his character in short.

His character. Mr. Bonnell, like another Samuel, seems

to have been consecrated to God from the womb, and to have had his first dawnings of reason enlightened by grace. He made early and quick improvements in knowledge and learning, greater in religion and piety. He began his journey to Heaven in the morning of life, and remembered his Creator in the days of his very childhood. He had noble and generous thoughts of God, joined with the humblest, lowest thoughts of himself; and a most inflamed love to our blessed Saviour. And by these principles were his life and actions influenced and governed: for in God he placed his confidence and trust; to God he resigned himself, his concerns, and very desires. With the lowest humility he submitted to his will, and with unparalleled patience bore his corrections. In silence he underwent pain and anguish, or, if he spake, it was all prayers and praises. His devotions had their daily returns with the sun; nor was it more constant in its course than they: prayer was the entertainment of his health, and support of his

sickness, his greatest delight and joy. He saw clearly through the vanity of life, and wisely considered, how short-lived and unsatisfying all its pleasures are ; and, therefore, proposed to himself a nobler end ; and, by an active faith, looked beyond the grave. There he saw joys which can never fail ; upon which he entirely fixed his heart, and all the bent of his desires ; and continued constant at every duty, which might help him forward towards the happy mansions of eternal pleasures.

In his conversation there was an easy cheerfulness, mixed with a religious gravity, something that commanded and pleased at once : and in all his actions, in his mien and behaviour, there appeared an humble modesty, a natural openness and sincerity : nothing that was dark or designing, assuming or vain, positive or morose ; but all plainness, gentleness, meekness. He laboured with great application to bring his passions to a ready submission to the dictates of grace and reason ; and by the happy methods he used, gained a mighty conquest over them. He fixed them upon proper objects, and kept them within narrow bounds : or, if he ever allowed them greater liberty, it was when, warmed by an active zeal, he endeavoured the advancement of piety, and the suppression of vice.

With respect to the other duties of the Christian life, his justice was unshaken, his integrity unsuspected. Interest lost all power where duty was concerned ; and he was assaulted by it, as a rock is by the sea, its waves are broken, but the rock stands firm and unmoved. His hands were never sullied

with disputable gain, nor his heart infected with any kind of fraud. Slander and detraction bore no part in his conversation ; and he put the best constructions upon actions they were capable of bearing.

He had a true Christian concern for the souls and bodies of men, and did all that in him lay to supply the wants of both. He was zealous for the church whereof he was a member, yet charitable to those who differed from him : and his very enemies shared in his love, his compassion, and his prayers. It was his daily study to be useful to the world, and to do good to mankind ; and he never rejoiced more, than when Providence gave him an opportunity of comforting any in distress, or relieving any in want.

As to his relations, there could not be a more dutiful obliging son, a more tender and indulgent husband, a more faithful and zealous friend ; making his friends' concerns, in the kindest manner, his own ; sharing in their sorrows and joys, and declining no pains to do them good in their fortunes, their characters, and souls. Our governors could not desire a better subject, nor our church a better member ; submitting to her authority, waiting upon her service, and reverencing her laws, and adorning all by a heavenly example.

And though he always studied to be little known, yet such excellences could not be hid ; he was known, and justly valued ; he was honoured by the bad, and beloved by the good of every persuasion. He was regarded by the great, and consulted by the wise. A general love attended him in his life, and as general sorrow waited on him to his grave.

And now, from the preceding account of Mr. Bonnell's life and character, I leave it to all competent judges to determine, if he was not a truly great man, according to all just notions of greatness, which can never be separated from piety and goodness. And whether many, who are reckoned heroes in the records of time, do not fall short of him in many instances of substantial virtue. For wherein did their greatness principally consist, but in raising a dust, and making a noise in the world? In commanding armies, and laying countries waste? In committing acts of violence and cruelty, and doing much mischief to mankind? Whereas his principles led him on to make all rejoice, but none mourn; to do men good in their valuable concerns, in their fortunes, their bodies, but chiefly in their souls. He studied to transcribe in his life, all the imitable perfections of God; and to be truly great, by resembling, as much as possible, that infinite fountain of greatness and goodness.

And from the same account of Mr. Bonnell's piety, and the several instances given of his virtues, we may see how glorious Christianity appears, when it duly influences our lives, and governs our actions: when it smooths our native roughness, and softens us into love and good nature, humility and meekness, gentleness and charity: when it enlightens the head with exalted thoughts of God, and warms the heart with his love and fear: when it opens our mouths in prayers and praises, our hands to the poor, and our doors to strangers: when it plants a firm faith in the soul, which is fruitful in producing all graces and virtues

there ; when it arms us with steady justice and truth, unshaken constancy, and invincible patience : when it exalts us above the world ; gives us just sentiments of its vanity, and strong desires after unseen delights : when it enlarges our prospect beyond the grave, and presents the spiritual world to our view, and fills us with enlivening hopes of being for ever happy there : when these hopes so powerfully act upon our souls, that we can be unconcerned spectators of human greatness, and desire silently and calmly to pass through this world : in a word, when Christianity makes us live, converse, and act here, as this great example of piety before us did : it is then that it shines with an irresistible beauty, and ravishes all, who attentively behold it, with its charms.

May we not likewise learn from what has been said of Mr. Bonnell's strict life, and constant discharge of every religious duty ; that religion is no impossible work, when we in earnest set about it : and that the difficulties of piety, and pressures of temporal affairs, are no reasonable excuse for neglecting the duties of it ? For here we have an instance of one, who reconciled a life of religion and business together ; who omitted no office of civil life, nor act of devotion ; who lived in the midst of temporal affairs, yet had his conversation in Heaven. Here we may see what mistaken notions they have, who think a wilderness, or a cell, the only scene of true devotion : for what is that, but putting our candle under a bushel, and not letting it shine before men ? Whereas Mr. Bonnell, like Enoch, walked with God amidst the throng of daily business ; the private cares of a family, and the

conscientious discharge of a weighty employment. Let this then silence our complaints of religion, and turn them all against ourselves, and make us own that we want not time to serve God, but zeal ; and that we have not too much business, but too little grace.

From the foregoing life may we not farther learn, what little ground there is for spiritual pride and vanity in the world ? Here we see a person, who made it his constant study to “deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly ;” yet did all this with the profoundest humility and lowliness ; none could have meaner thoughts of himself ; none could be farther from despising others : let this consideration make us, who fall vastly short of him in many instances of goodness, instead of boasting of our righteousness, or trusting in it, as the proud Pharisee did, use the humble language of the publican, and say, God be merciful to us sinners !

And is it not for the honour of the reformed religion, that it can give such an instance (and blessed be God, that many others can be given likewise,) of all that strict severe piety which the Romanists pretend to, as only to be found in their religious houses ? Sure I am, that were the lives of their most celebrated saints, compared with this gentleman’s character, (if they can be called lives, which are so full of fable,) a manifest difference would soon appear. Here all that strictness in reality, to which many of them were only pretenders : but withal, a piety that was rational and sober ; prudent and intelligible ; meek and charitable ; useful to the world, and charming in itself : a piety,

that was not clouded by melancholy, nor disturbed with superstition, enthusiasm, and other foolish passions: a piety, that was not supercilious and proud; cruel and designing; but was tempered with the meekness and lowliness of Christ: and that love and joy, peace, long-suffering, goodness, and faith, which are the genuine fruits of the Spirit of God.

Must it not also be matter of great joy to the Church of England, to see all its principles and laws, so truly transcribed in the life of one of its excellent sons? Here is all that generous piety, that unbounded charity and love, which are so remarkable in our Church. Here is religion in its native beauty, and most charming dress; as it bears the greatest resemblance to its divine Founder; and has most of God, and Christ, and heaven in it. And would we behold a Church-of-England man, who has all the accomplishments she can give him; who has fully imbibed her doctrine, and gives himself up to the conduct of her laws; who joins daily in her devotions, and receives the Holy Sacrament from her hands; who partakes of her extensive charity, and is actuated by her primitive spirit; who honours her laws, and lives up to her precepts: consider Mr. Bonnell well, and "it is he." This Church he honoured and loved; and her misfortunes he bewailed: he saw her constitution primitive and apostolical; her doctrine pure; her services rational and heavenly: but lamented that so many, who call themselves by her name, should bring so much scandal upon her by their immoral lives. But what he could not amend in others, he studied to prevent in himself; and effectually shewed to all who knew him,

how glorious our Church would be, did all who own her authority come up to her principles in their lives.

And now at last, to come to a conclusion, I would desire every one, who considers the life of this excellent man, to ask themselves this serious question : Whether, all things duly weighed, this world, and the next ; the shortness of life, and the eternity to follow ; they would not rather live and die like Mr. Bonnell ; enjoy the present pleasures of his virtues, and be entitled to their exceeding great reward ; than act one of the most busy parts of human life ; than possess whatever the most boundless ambition can crave ; than make the greatest noise and figure in the world ? For what is this short life, and all its poor concerns ? It appears, and is gone ; flies like a shadow, and vanishes as a dream. Who then that is truly wise, would lose the substantial joys of a good conscience ; that peace, those comforts which religion gives ; and chiefly, those enlivening hopes of immortality and glory, which are the happy consequents of piety : to glitter awhile in the world, be the subject of talk, and gazed at by the multitude ; to strike our fellow-creatures with terror, and gratify our pride and vain-glory ? how quickly does a death-bed cure us of these follies ; give us a new taste and relish of things, take off the thick scales which stick to our eyes, and the false colours of worldly glory ; till it appears in its native littleness and deformity, and at last vanishes into nothing ? Then shall we be convinced, (O why are we not before?) that there is no wisdom like securing our eternal interest ; nor madness, like losing

our souls, though we got the whole world in exchange.

But such a life as Mr. Bonnell's was, brings every day new delights to the soul: the pleasures it gives increase with time, improve upon enjoyment, and leave no ungrateful relish upon the mind. A soul so resigned to God, is calm amidst all the storms of fortune, and disorders of the world, is not afraid of men, nor disturbed at evil tidings; but goes quietly through a world of noise and vanity; knowing that it is under the care of infinite power and wisdom; and still has heaven in its view: heaven! that end of all labours! and sanctuary from trouble and sin! that eternal retreat from grief, from misery and pain! the residence of God, and angels, and happy spirits! a soul firmly fixed upon heaven and heavenly things, pities the vain designs and restless pursuits of mankind; and wonders that so much time and labour should be thrown away, upon what can never profit, and very imperfectly please; which, well employed, might secure present tranquillity and peace, with a happy reversion of endless joy and glory. Such a happy soul knows and considers, that most of these restless and aspiring mortals, shall be snatched away in the midst of their projects and hopes; and then, full of anguish and vain remorse, shall sadly wish, that they had minded this world less, and the other more.

If then the case be really so; if religion be our only happiness, and piety our truest wisdom: the use we should make of this great example of all these is, to bewail the imperfections of our graces, the coldness of our devotions, and the many defects

of all our religious performances; when compared with his exalted piety, his deep humility, his flaming zeal and love. This consideration should check our towering thoughts, and keep us from over-rating our own worth, which falls so vastly short of his; who yet was as low in his own esteem as he was high in that of others. But chiefly, his example should inflame our zeal, and set every faculty in motion; should make us earnest in our prayers for his graces, and in our endeavours to imitate his virtues; that we may at last share in his reward.

And since angels rejoice at the conversion of sinners; and since Mr. Bonnell's zeal for souls was so great in his imperfect state; and no doubt is now refined into a seraphic flame: we cannot but hope, that if either his writings or his life be instrumental in turning one sinner from his evil ways; or confirming any in their good purposes and actions; it will add to his joy, and improve his glory in heaven.

And we need not question, but we shall partake in his happiness; and join for ever with him in that work of praise, which was his most delightful exercise below, and is a great part of his reward above: if with his diligence and care, we watch over our hearts, our tongues, and steps: if with the fervours and humility of his soul, we pray for grace and strength from God to walk in the Divine laws and commandments; and particularly, to "be kept" (as he in one place expresses it) "from speaking a vain or proud thing, doing an unjust thing, or thinking an impure thing."

In short, if, like him, we would be happy, like him,

we must be wise. Not according to the mistaken "wisdom of this world," which is "foolishness with God:" but that wisdom which is from above; which descends from the Father of lights, and God of all grace. And St. James's description of that wisdom, gives us Mr. Bonnell's character in very few words: "For he was pure and peaceable; gentle, and easy to be entreated; full of mercy and good fruits; without partiality, and without hypocrisy." Jam. iii. 17.

OF THE INTERMEDIATE STATE OF BLESSED SOULS.

**A
S E R M O N**

**PREACHED AT THE
FUNERAL OF JAMES BONNELL, ESQ.**

**IN
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, DUBLIN,**

APRIL XXIX, MDCXCIX.

**BY
EDWARD WETENHALL,
LORD BISHOP OF KILMORE AND ARDAGH.**

AN
ADVERTISEMENT
TOUCHING THE
SERMON AND ITS SUBJECT.

THE following Sermon was drawn up and preached in much haste ; my dear friend's death being a great surprise to me, who was then but just come up from home, into the city, and very full of business, which had been as unexpected as it was of concernment to me. From such haste and discomposure it necessarily came to pass, that I could neither do the numerous congregation I was to preach to, that service ; nor the deceased, that justice, which I willingly would have done to both. But having endeavoured what I could in those circumstances, and finding my poor performance accepted ; I could not deny a copy of it (such as it was) to the importunity of some, whose grief and weakness suffered them not to be hearers : nor do I think it reasonable now, at the instance of the same persons, to withstand the publication of it ; which is but a poor duty to the memory of one, whom I loved so highly, and knew so well.

I am heartily glad to see a more perfect delineation of this great example, from the hand of one, who had more time, and better informations, than could then be obtained by me. And however some may think that both the author of the foregoing life, and myself, have set our deceased friend's character above what there was real ground ; for I must take the liberty sacredly to protest, that I think we have both hitherto come short of his intrinsic worth.

Had I not had a very high sense thereof, I should not have chosen the text I have made use of, for the discourse at his funeral : my first subject would not have answered my second : but I truly believed, that if ever soul on earth felt itself united to that glorious company of " the spirits of just men made perfect " above, his soul did. I had had for several years, (as often as we could meet,) most intimate conversation with him : and when we were distant from one another, no less constant correspondence by letters : and I must profess, I have often been warmed, and almost transported, even by his letters, as well as his discourse : nor have I, among the many acquaintances I have had, met with any of so devout and heavenly a spirit, one person only excepted, who, I hope, is yet in the land of the living ; and I pray God he long may be so.

I can scarce think there is any serious unprejudiced person, that, but in a tolerable degree, knew Mr. Bonnell, who must not say, if he be true to his own sense of things, that his conversation was in Heaven, in every (even the strictest) sense of the phrase. He was truly a citizen of the New Jerusalem. His temper, his discourse, (than which commonly there is

nothing more shews the abundance of the heart) his whole life, and all his actions; his way of conversing in the world, and in a sort, his very mien, bespoke him such. A sweet and unaffected contempt of this world appeared in his behaviour. As far as I have been able to see or learn, in all the opportunities he had to enrich himself, (which were not a few) money neither stuck to his fingers nor his heart. He lived in the midst of much business, (and the greatest part of it very troublesome) with a mind full of composedness; with affections free from being entangled by earthly concerns, or the secret witchcraft of seen and sublunary goods.

His soul was above the frowns of great ones, as well as the caresses of the common sort; faithful to all, in what was their true interest. His singular prudence and dexterity in managing that great and necessary (though most difficult and commonly unwelcome) office of reproof, has been touched by the hand I before mentioned. I could relate some happy instances thereof, did not the circumstances of some survivor make it inconvenient.

I will add thereto, the mention of only one other holy art, which he was as great a master of, as any I have known. Let the company wherein he was be talking of whatsoever they happened to fall on, he would, without affectation, very naturally, and not straining any thing said for a connexion, bring about the discourse to religious and profitable subjects. I have admired his facility and godly simplicity herein: and I cannot forbear recommending the study of such edifying conversation, to all serious Christians;

especially to clergymen, and that with more than common care, in their Lord's-day table talk, and ordinary visits on that day, if they make any.

There were many other personal excellences, in which my deceased friend was eminent, that I may not, and am glad I need not, particularly insist on in this place. In short, I am truly of opinion, that in the best age of the church on earth, had he lived therein, he would have passed for a saint, and a very exemplary person. And I seriously pray, that any who seem to envy him the character that has been given him, (for some such I am sensible there may be) may not fall short of one half of his virtues.

These are (*bona fide*) the real sentiments of, good reader,

Thy true friend and servant,

In our Lord Christ Jesus,

E. KILMORE and ARDAGH.

S E R M O N

PREACHED AT THE

FUNERAL OF JAMES BONNELL, ESQ.

HEB. XII. 23.

AND TO THE SPIRITS OF JUST MEN MADE PERFECT.

THE eloquent and learned author of this Epistle, (for such he was in an ordinary course of attainment, as well as extraordinarily inspired) whether St. Paul, or St. Luke, or St. Barnabas, or whoever, spends much of it, in comparing the legal and evangelical dispensation; that is, God's method or form of managing the covenant under the law, and under the gospel: and having stated both, he, by the state of such comparison, all along asserts and proves the great transcendancy of the gospel dispensation above that of the law.

This he does, even in a considerable part of the chapter whence I have taken these words; making the result of the comparison an argument to aggravate men's disobedience to the gospel, above the old Jews' disobedience to the law.

The point on which the comparison here runs is, the manner of the publication of each. The delivery of the law was dreadful, or with most amazing terrors; withal threatened to be fatal to such who should but touch the mountain whence it was pronounced: all put together, the terrors such, that "they who heard it, could not endure to hear it again." But the promulgation of the gospel was calm, sweet, charming, and every way salutary; such, which not only enamoured all its hearers with what they heard, but endeared to them the very places where it was delivered; the persons who were sent to deliver it; and even the whole society and multitude of them, who were partakers of those blessed tidings, making them all, however distant, one body, by union of hearts, mutually transported, and made the happier by one another's growing happiness. This is the sum of verse 18, 19, 20. and to the end of the 24th verse.

Particularly in ver. 18, and so for four verses together, he sets forth the astonishing manner wherein the law was delivered: from "a mount that indeed might be touched or felt," (*ψηλαφωμένῳ*.) In its own nature it was, as any other bodies, an object of feeling; but yet it "burned with fire," and was declared at that time so holy, that it "might not be touched:" for, "If so much as a beast touch it, (*Θίγῃ*, by actual contact pressed it) the beast should be stoned, or thrust through with a dart*." And to enhance the dreadfulness of all, while the law was about to be delivered, and in the very delivery of it,

* Exod. xix. 12, 13.

"Blackness and darkness," says our author; "Thundering and lightning, and a thick cloud," says Moses, "were upon the mount." And from thence "the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, which they that heard, entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more, for they could not endure that which was commanded *." So terrifying scene was the promulgation of the law on mount Sinai:

Then, on the other hand, in three verses, (viz. 22, 23, 24.) he represents the nature of our calling under the Gospel. "Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven; and to God, the Judge of all; and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant; and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." All these glorious eminences of the evangelical state, above the law, are verified to Christian people, even in the present mortal life; for herein are we initiated and incorporated unto the "city of the living God," which is his Church, the "spiritual mount Sion." Herein we have the knowledge of an unseen world, wherein we are taught, "are an innumerable company of angels:" and both they have more communion with us, and consequently we with them, than we are aware of. Herein are we assured, that the souls of saints departed are in a paradisiacal state above; that the "spirits of just

* Exod. xix. 16.

men made perfect," are one part of the heavenly inhabitants *.

But much more will all these things be verified to us, and in us, when we ourselves shall have shot the great gulph, and be transported into that world of blessed spirits. And with regard to this latter condition, which we hope for, shall I take these words, and conclude thence this proposition:

"It will be one branch and advantage of our felicity in heaven, that we shall there enjoy the society of the spirits of just men made perfect."

For opening and making good hereof, there are two points necessary to be stated, or two difficulties to be resolved.

I. What perfection the spirits of just men, while separated from their bodies, may be conceived to attain to.

II. What happiness their society can be there to us, their Christian brethren, when gathered to them.

As to the first of these, What perfection the spirits of just men, while separated from the body, may be conceived to attain to. This may be resolved in three particulars.

I. It is one step to perfection, that in that separate estate, the spirits are stript of all the impediments and disturbances of their perfection. Divers of these our souls are here encompassed with, as long as they inhabit these houses of clay, which we call our bodies. Such are,

1. "All sinful infirmities." The hearts of none of

* Luke xvi. 25.

the saints, in their present estate, are so purged; but some remains of corruption secretly lurk in them, or cleave to them. Possibly, some unhappy propensities to certain sins; some easiness or aptness to yield to sundry temptations; some vanity or levity of mind; if none of these, yet at least something of affection to the things that are seen; some aversion and loathsomeness to be turned naked into an unknown world, and entertained with none but invisible and intellectual objects. Nothing is there, in the separate estate, expected, or to come from sense, from which, notwithstanding, here we have been accustomed to take in most of our comforts. This kind of abstract and stript condition, flesh and blood is somewhat fearful to enter into. But from this, amongst other infirmities, the first step into the unseen world delivers us. As soon as we are there, and during the separate estate, farewell all infirmities of or from sense, for farewell sense itself, all its organs being laid aside for that present estate.

A second sort of hindrances to perfection, are "Pænal Infirmities;" all such bodily infelicities, which befall us as the punishment of our sins; faintness, febleness, decay of spirits, pains, diseases, and other indispositions, by which the body becomes unfit and unable to hold pace with the soul, or to serve and concur in its actions. Oftentimes a man cannot eat a meal, but he is unfit for the duties of his common or Christian calling.

The supplying the necessities of nature

————— (*Animam quoque prægravat,
Atque affligit humi Divina particulam auras,*)

loads the soul, and fastens to earth that part of the Divine nature. Not to mention here the perplexities of men's particular affairs; our almost incredible crossing and thwarting one another, and divers other ways preying mutually upon time and life, and wasting one another's good hours. Verily, the impediments of perfection, which arise from our outward circumstances, conditions, and both lawful and necessary employments of life, are almost innumerable. But of these, the separate state rids us also. Yea, and of a more troublesome sort of evils, which (however spiritual) we may justly reckon amongst the penal infirmities of our mortal state; namely, doubts and fears, both as to our present and future condition. We see not in ourselves, perhaps, that sanctity we desire; we feel not always that strength of faith, that warmth of love, that assurance of hope, with which we remember God sometimes to have favoured us. On the contrary, we find a great dullness on our spirits; which we are apt to account hardness of heart; and we cannot mourn with such tenderness over our sins, as we have done. Hereupon we doubt of the sincerity or sufficiency of our repentance: we fear ourselves to be of the number of those temporary proselytes, whom our Lord designed by the stony ground, (Matt. xiii.) such who believe, and rejoice in hope, only for a time. Again, revolving in our minds our former falls, and the strength of our corruptions still, we are apt to entertain such melancholy and desponding thoughts in spirituals, as were those of David in another case, "I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul." These are grounds of great sadness, and sore lets to Chris-

tian perfection. But when once Christ shall have delivered us from the burden of corruption, we shall immediately find ourselves at ease and rest, in a state of safety and security from all dangers, and past, not only sinning, but the fear of it. All these, and any other like molesting anxieties, the separate estate sets us above.

3. The last sort of hindrances I shall mention, are, the interruptions and disturbances the soul receives from the senses; it can scarce be determined, whether our eyes and ears give us more assistance towards taking in of knowledge, than hindrances many times in digesting those imperfect notices they take in, and in pursuing our notions and contemplations: how frequently comes it to pass, that having set ourselves, I will not say to study, but even to pray, or to meditate on heavenly and divine things, some untoward, unseasonable object is cast in by sense, which turns off thought, and diverts the soul clearly from its purpose; stops and checks it in its motion, and quite puts it out of its road; and either scatters or strikes dead all happy cogitation and devotion!

Now of all these, and the like numberless infelicities, intanglements and incumbrances, is the spirit divested in its separate estate. And being thus set free,

II. It soon arrives at a perfection of its rational faculty, which immediately becomes furnished with the most agreeable and felicitating habits.

1. As to the understanding. It cannot be by us, in our present state conceived, what speedy and vast progress the soul will make in knowledge, when it

shall be thus enfranchised and set at liberty. Nothing in that state can hinder its discursive powers; that it should not from one truth known, immediately infer many others; or rather (*uno intuitu*) behold an endless train of consequents.

But it is to be considered, the spirits of just men cannot go out of the world possessed of the notice only of one or two single truths: they have long been endowed with what the wise Agar styles the knowledge of the holy *. (The insight into that body, and variety of truths, which made them wise unto salvation.) And from such plenteous stock of principles, how infinite will soon be the inferences! At least, how vastly various the improvements, with such minds, advanced now into the sphere of intelligences, will make, draw, and accumulate! And besides the stock of knowledge, they carry hence with them, what numbers of new objects will entertain them in that world of spirits! The innumerable company of angels; the general assembly, and Church of the first-born: (Patriarchs and Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, and Confessors,) but above these, God, the judge of all, and Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant: dear Jesus! who loved us, and redeemed us with his blood; (that longed-for spectacle) his glorious person, shall then the eyes of our soul behold. We shall also then know what that Spirit is, which has dwelt in our hearts, and sanctified us: and we shall have an intellectual vision of the Ancient of Days, the eternal and Almighty Father. We shall then see clearly through

* PROVERBS. XXX. 5.

all the riddles and mysteries of our faith. Nay, faith shall be no more, because sight shall be in its room. Truly, when I deeply think on these things, it seems to me worth one's labour to die, merely to be able to frame but one direct and proper conception what God is; of whose essence here we can, for the main, only frame some negative notions, that is, rather say what he is not, than what he is: but one minute of eternity (pardon the expression) will then inform us more, than all ages of time have here done. The Lumen Gloriam, which inquisitive wits have talked of, but the deepest heads seem not to know what here to make of, will indeed soon shew us a new universe of wonders. Thus briefly as to the perfection of the understanding.

II. As to the will: that shall then perfectly follow the conduct of this raised and heavenly enlightened judgment: that shall no longer dispute its dictates, or in the least hang back. Indeed it will be wholly transformed into love; into the love of God and Christ, and angels, and saints; and amongst the last, even of the saints too that are on earth. There will be no desire of any other things, but what are enjoyed, unless it be of a re-union to the old friend, its fallen body, and the gathering together, or completing the number of the faithful. The separate spirit may perhaps, nay, must in course of nature, earnestly desire to be clothed upon with its house which is from Heaven: to have its late corruption, put on incorruption; and the whole man entirely to be with the Lord. But even this desire shall be without pain or impatience; with the highest submission to, and complacency in, the will of God, till the happy day of as-

complishment come. There will be no desire, which will not resolve itself into delight: and every act of desire will meet with infinite satisfaction in the sight of God: and that sight still inflame new desires. And thus a constant circulation of delight, and desire, and satisfaction be maintained, till all be consummated at the resurrection, and thence to eternity. O the depth of the riches of the goodness, and grace, and glory of God! Thus briefly as to the perfection of the will.

Lastly, we may yet conceive of a third faculty, even in the separate soul, and that is memory and conscience; as conscience will then signify a lasting sense of what we have done in the body. Now, I say; that in the future blessed estate, even this shall be perfected. That is, all evil conscience, (all conscience of guilt) all sin shall be washed away with the blood of the Lamb. The penal sense or memory of sin shall be entirely taken off and extinct. Only we may conceive so much remembrance of our own vileness to remain, as may serve, amidst all our glories, to raise in us a higher admiration of the most glorious goodness of God, and more passionate love of Christ. Thus in the Revelation, while the angels cry, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sits on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created," Rev. iv. 10, 11. They remember themselves naturally vile; however, now

crowned and glorious. They adore, love, and praise the God that has made them otherwise than they were by nature: and lay all their glories at the feet of him who gave them. But, I say, all uneasy memory of sin, and even of their infirmities, while they were here below, will be banished. The comfort of their good works will stick. These follow them even in death, (Rev. xiv. 13.) and the solace of a good conscience advances into joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Thus as to the perfection of the faculties of the separate spirits of just men made perfect. *

Before we proceed further, something should be said, that beside the old faculties which we now have, we do not know but we may have some new ones added, suitable to that new world into which we enter: it seems to me very probable we shall. But of these things we can yet only make conjectures: however, a word in brief as to the perfection of their graces.

Some graces, even amongst them that seem here of the first magnitude, there are, which in their own nature argue imperfection: such are faith, and hope, and patience, and long suffering, and some like them. Now all these, by reason of the perfection of the future condition, shall cease and be changed into what is agreeable to perfection. Faith will pass into vision: what we now believe, we shall then see; and so the evidence of things not seen, will be at an end. Hope will pass into enjoyment, and being possessed of the substance of things hoped for, we shall hope no more. Expectation, in which the nature of hope essentially lies, must in such case be needs at an end. Patience of evils, can there have no place, where no evil dwells,

nor bearing with one another's infirmities, when all our infirmities (personal and social, or both our and our brethren's,) are taken away. And so of other like graces. But the greatest of all graces is charity, which will then and ever remain; and that in a most exalted estate. Our love to God will not then be that faint, dull, poor, forced compound of warmth and indifferency it is now. It will then be all pure and perpetual flame. Our love to mankind will not be that narrow-hearted stingy affection, which here begins with self, and too much confines itself thereto: but as far as finite beings are capable thereof, of the same comprehension with God's love. We shall see by the light of his glory, and love by the emanations of his philanthropy, or by a sympathy with his eternal good-will towards mankind.

I have thus endeavoured, as I am able, to state the first point, or resolve the first difficulty proposed; namely, to what perfection the spirits of just men, while separated from their bodies, may be conceived to attain.

The second is,

What happiness their society can there be to their Christian brethren when gathered to them?

And for resolving hereof, I lay this for a foundation, which, for the present, I must take for a certain truth, because I cannot stand particularly to prove it: namely, that the saints shall assuredly know one another in the future world. Indeed, I judge it unquestionably true, and that as well of the wicked, as of the just. But I have no occasion at present to speak, touching the former. The saints, I say, shall

not only renew all their virtuous acquaintances, and old friendships, even after the grave, but contract new ones. We shall know Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, Moses, and Elias, and the Prophets; St. Peter and St. Paul, and the beloved Disciple, and all those ancient witnesses of the faith, who here, many of them, "wandered about in deserts, and mountains, and caves of the earth;" some of them "clothed in sheep skins and goat skins, destitute, afflicted, tormented;" others of them "naked, and cold, and hungry, of whom the world was not worthy. But God has provided, that without us even they should not be made perfect." Heb. xi. ult. Now this being laid as a foundation, we may conceive, amongst other particulars, that the society of the spirits of just men made perfect will contribute to our happiness, even when glorified in the three following points:

I. It will be one degree of happiness, to be free from the solicitude we are apt to retain for the condition, good, and welfare of many of our Christian friends. There are divers perhaps now dead, whom in life we dearly loved, and touching the condition of whose souls we have many times fear and anxiety: though sometimes again as we have reason, we conceive great hopes touching their happiness. When, therefore, we shall find them as happy as ourselves, instated as co-heirs with our Lord Christ Jesus in his kingdom, all such solicitude must cease. That painful anxiety, with which possibly we may go out of the world, touching the perseverance and final salvation of some we leave behind us, in the midst of a wicked and adulterous generation, (amidst the temptations

and violence of the world, obnoxious to the malice of the Devil, and the deceitfulness of sin,) the fears, lest by any or all these they should miscarry (all this trouble and concern, which our love to them gives us for them,) will, I say, be removed; and as we rest from our labour, so we shall be at rest from those cares too. This certainly is a degree of felicity, for which many of us (many a tender-hearted parent, many husbands and wives, many pious souls in other relations) would give a world if they had it at present to be sure of. This is the first point.

II. Inasmuch as charity will be there most perfect, the society of that holy multitude must vastly enlarge our otherwise private joys. It is the nature of charity, says the Apostle, (1 Cor. xiii. 4.) that it is kind; that it envieth not; that it seeketh not its own; that it rejoiceth not in evil, but certainly, therefore, rejoiceth in others' good. When, therefore, we shall see the whole body of the faithful all blessed about us, in that immense circle of light, their bliss will, as by sympathy, increase our own, and we shall shine the brighter by the vicinity of their glories.

III. Forasmuch according to human speaking, and even understanding, the more there are in heaven of the spirits of just men made perfect, the greater must be the glory of the most high God; it will prove on this account an increase of our joys in Heaven; that by their society the glory of God is increased. To raise the glory of God to the greatest pitch, to set forth his name, and bring credit to our holy religion, ever has been, is, and will be the grand design and endeavour of all holy men on earth.

When, therefore, their souls shall be received into their Father's house, and shall there join with the vast fraternity and assembly of saints and angels, whose incessant business it is to give glory unto God, this blessed company must needs enhance their joys. It has been sweet to them many a time to give God praise, even by themselves, on their knees in their closets; yet a much greater joy, to praise him with their Christian brethren in the great congregation: but when they shall be taken into the heavenly quire, and be taught by saints as well as angels, to sing his praise, here will be a congregation and harmony indeed! Who can express what joy this must fill such souls with? This is matter of joy to the very angels in Heaven: they (says our Lord in the Gospel,) rejoice at the conversion of a sinner; and much more then must we, at the salvation of so many sinners, (that have been in that state happily changed) and at their mutual glorifying God with us.

I have thus endeavoured (according to what of time I have had to consider, and what I have of ability to comprehend, I have, I say, endeavoured) faithfully to represent the perfections of separate holy souls, and how the society of one another adds to each other's bliss. I am sensible I have come much short of so great a subject. Words cannot express it, no, nor thoughts reach it. "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love him," 1 Cor. ii. 9.

If our dear brother (whose earthly part lies here before us,) could hear how I have spoken of these

things, though I have endeavoured to take the highest and boldest flights, which with sobriety I could, yet could he, I say, now, after his short experience of that blessed perfection, hear what I have said, and together conceive what notions you have framed thereof, how would he pity us all, groping thus in the dark, discoursing and thinking of heavenly perfection, just as men born blind do of lights; or as those who never saw any thing but midnight, would do of the sun walking in his noon-day's brightness. How would he, if not reprove our mistake, yet help our errors—*Eja sequor!*—I trust we shall all follow him into like perfection, and then see also.

I would here willingly stop, or draw a curtain, for that I am not able to delineate to the life, so much of real worth, and true Christianity, such prudence and temper, such heavenly mindedness, and serious sense of religion, as well as exactness in the outward offices of it, as dwelt in our deceased brother. Verily, he was rather a subject for admiration and wonder, than for commendations. I had almost said, he was above praise. Such charity to the bodies; such care and compassion to the souls of men; such integrity and uprightness in his dealing, and yet such strange abilities for the dispatch of business; such a self-denying spirit and strict retiredness, yet such constancy in doing public good; such readiness to oblige all, yet such sincerity in his friendship, it is not easy to find: I sincerely profess, I know not where, in the present age, to meet with, every way, the like man. In a word, a person so accomplished for the public

employments he sustained, yet no less accurate in his duties to God, to his neighbour, and himself, I fear scarce an age may shew. This be spoken in general as to the bulk of his excellences and whole conversation.

As to some particulars of his life, (for to all I cannot speak,) there are two, which I shall take notice of. The first of them is indeed such, in which (according to the judgments of some fierce men,) he needs to be vindicated. He held (or rather, he was in a sort by force kept in) his place at the Custom-house, during the worst part of the last reign. Touching this, I will only read to you part of a letter, which I this day received from a person of known worth and integrity. I can speak nothing therein of my own knowledge, for all correspondency, even by letters, was then cut off between my dear friend and me. The letter, after a modest excuse, which indeed it needed not, relates: "That he happened to be continued in his employment at the Custom-house, because (at that time) they could not be without his knowledge in the revenue; but how he did employ his time, and the interest he had amongst that sort then in power, is to none better known (saith the writer) than to myself; he was eminently charitable, and useful to the poor oppressed Protestants; both those who had lived in the city, and others who fled for refuge; and made so great use of the opportunities he had to relieve and assist them, that it was more than one half of his business to run about and act in their behalf. What income he had by his employment, he scattered abroad amongst them, and sought out occasions for so doing;

and very often ran hazards in pressing their sufferings; to the reproach of a malicious and revengeful people, who had robbed and abused them. We were daily together in one corner or other, (as we durst without observance,) and I am sure he valued nothing more than the good he could do (in that sad time,) to all that wanted his help. I might enlarge upon this subject, but it may be needless: he is gone to his reward in that heavenly kingdom."

Thus my voucher.

I have all the reason in the world to believe this relation; and I here solemnly declare, I do: it holds such proportion with the temper of his life, known to me. And this both sufficiently vindicates, and together highly commends our deceased friend in that dismal juncture.

The other particular relates to God's especial providence to him on his death-bed. It so came to pass, that from his first taking his bed, his head, of all parts, was mostly seized; and though he had frequent and long lucid intervals, yet he too often wanted what we call sane memory: but how often, none knew so well, as she who best knew him, and was of any, most constantly with him. Strangers, who are not acquainted with the circumstances and private conversation of people, when in their healths, are apt to mistake many speeches or sayings of theirs in sickness, and upon approaching death, especially if unusual; and this befel the deceased. Divers visitors and people about him on his death-bed, misinterpreting many things he spoke to his wife, to have

been delirious, which she knew to be only the pious breathings of his soul. Notwithstanding, it must be confessed, that sometimes during his sickness, by the interruption of his reason, through his disease, we lost what perhaps would have been the most glorious scene of his life. For from a soul of such standing in Christ, and so long practised in all Christian virtues, (and more especially in all the parts of godliness, and in the several kinds of devout exercises, from such a soul, I say) many instances of great "peace and joy in the Holy Ghost;" of the assurances of God's love, and foretastes of heaven; many exalted ejaculations, and almost seraphic strains of praise, (haply even raptures and extasy) might have been expected: not to mention counsels and directions to friends, possibly some peculiar commands also to certain of them: exhortations and admonitions to such attending him that needed them, and passionate attestations to the truth of religion unto all; together with exemplary dying recommendations of those he left behind him to God: these, and many like advantages, which none but souls like his knew how to value, we lost by this unhappy affection of his noblest part. But it was God's hand, and more a punishment to us than to him; for, blessed be our good God, he died in perfect peace.

Yet upon this, there is one observation, which I cannot forbear making, that may be for the spiritual benefit of us all. It pleased God so to govern his tongue, and, as far as could be perceived, his very thoughts, under all those discomposed paroxysms or emotions of mind, that nothing came from him any

wise unbecoming a Christian of the most heavenly temper. All that was heard from him was either prayers or invitations thereto, or arithmetical accounts: that is, he was, even in his deliriums, either employed as a devout person in the exercise of his religion, or as a diligent officer in the discharge of his calling and honest business. A rare providence! and such as should teach us all two things:

1. How happy it is to be, in our health, diligent in the works of our Christian and common calling. It may, in the very unhappiest and most dangerous part of our lives, have an influence upon us, or move God so to commiserate us, that in a dying, and even doting hour, we no wise dishonour him, but our very infirmities may prove good examples.

2. It should further teach us, be we of what condition soever, not to put off any preparation for death to the last. If such a person as this was, so upright and innocent, so religious and devout, so temperate, nay even abstemious, had but little more than lucid intervals on his death-bed; what may they expect, who have scarce ever seriously entertained the thoughts of God, or their duty? who at night seldom go to bed sober? or in the day-time live regularly many hours in all their life? and if these should then want the use of reason, how can they prepare for another world? repentance is a long and serious work, to men of readiest and largest parts, of most composed minds, hard to be performed as it should be. We have been a long time committing sins, and that in great variety, and cannot possibly in a few moments look over all that has been so long in doing. A general repentance will not serve for all sins.

Many require particular tears, humiliation, acts of faith, charity, reconciliation with, or satisfaction to our neighbours. Ah! consider all ye vain ones, how can all this be done on a death-bed, and in a few hours, yea, though it should happen you had days, in a few days? The good God grant all may take warning early!

There are other things I should have taken notice of, as to the memory of our dear brother deceased. But possibly some may think I am too much a friend to be impartial. And I confess I am otherwise unfit for panegyrics; I am sure I am unable for such performance on this occasion. I therefore conclude, commending him as a pattern of most universal virtue to all your imitation; and beseeching God, that being admonished by this instance of mortality, we may all of us, if not in the days of our youth, (for those are past with many of us) yet in the time of our health and vigour, in the time of our soundest reason and best judgment, remember our Creator, acquaint ourselves with God, and make our peace with him; live always prepared for our Lord's coming, whensoever and howsoever he shall call us hence; that so at last, when we are taken away, and our bodies return to the dust as they were, our souls may be gathered to the "spirits of just men made perfect," as I doubt not this our brother's is. Amen, Amen, good Lord.

THE END.

